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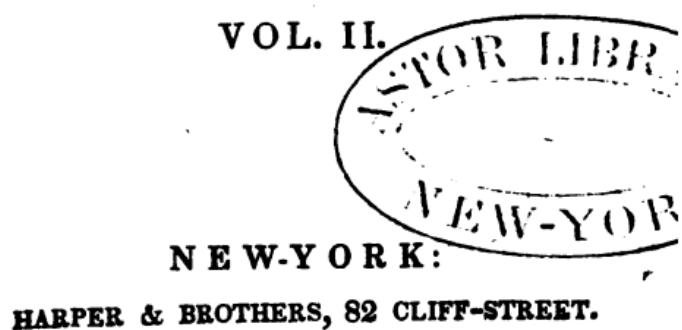


THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

SELECTED AND ARRANGED
BY
REV. WILLIAM P. PAGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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ESSAYS, &c.

A SUSPICIOUS TEMPER HARDENS AND CORRUPTS THE HEART.

“ You wonder I’ve so little wit,
Friend John, so often to be bit.
None better guard against a cheat
Than he who is a knave complete.”

MART.—LEWIS’s *Trans.*

SUSPICION, however necessary it may be to our safe passage through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common measures, as a token of depravity and corruption; and a Greek writer of sentences has laid down, as a standing maxim, that *he who believes not another on his oath knows himself to be perjured.*

We can form our opinions of that which we know not, only by placing it in comparison with something that we know; whoever, therefore, is overruled with suspicion, and detects artifice and stratagem in every proposal, must either have learned by experience or observation the wickedness of mankind and been taught to avoid fraud by having often suffered or seen treachery, or he must derive his judgment from the consciousness of his own disposition, and impute to others the same inclinations which he feels predominant in himself.

To learn caution by turning our eyes upon life and observing the arts by which negligence is surprised, timidity overthrown, and credulity amused

requires either great latitude of converse and long acquaintance with business, or uncommon activity of vigilance and acuteness of penetration. When, therefore, a young man, not distinguished by vigour of intellect, comes into the world full of scruples and diffidence ; makes a bargain with many provisional limitations ; hesitates in his answer to a common question, lest more should be intended than he can immediately discover : has a long reach in detecting the projects of his acquaintance ; considers every caress as an act of hypocrisy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection from the tenderness of his friends, because he believes no one to have any real tenderness but for himself ; whatever expectations this early sagacity may raise of his future eminence or riches, I can seldom forbear to consider him as a wretch incapable of generosity or benevolence ; as a villain early completed beyond the need of common opportunities and gradual temptations.

Upon men of this class, instruction and admonition are generally thrown away, because they consider artifice and deceit as proofs of understanding ; they are misled at the same time by the two great seducers of the world, vanity and interest, and not only look upon those who act with openness and confidence, as condemned by their principles to obscurity and want, but as contemptible for narrowness of comprehension, shortness of views, and slowness of contrivance.

The world has been long amused with the mention of policy in public transactions and of art in private affairs ; they have been considered as the effects of great qualities, and as unattainable by men of the common level : yet I have not found many performances, either of art or policy, that required such stupendous efforts of intellect, or might not have been effected by falsehood and impudence without the assistance of any other power. To profess what he does not mean, to promise what he

cannot perform, to flatter ambition with prospects of promotion, and misery with hopes of relief, sooth pride with appearances of submission, and appease enmity by blandishments and bribes, can surely imply nothing more or greater than a mind devoted wholly to its own purposes, a face that cannot blush, and a heart that cannot feel.

These practices are so mean and base, that he who finds in himself no tendency to use them cannot easily believe that they are considered by others with less detestation; he therefore suffers himself to slumber in false security, and becomes a prey to those who applaud their own subtilty because they know how to steal upon his sleep, and exult in the success which they could never have obtained, had they not attempted a man better than themselves, who was hindered from obviating their stratagems, not by folly, but by innocence.

Suspicion is, indeed, a temper so uneasy and restless, that it is very justly appointed the concomitant of guilt. It is said that no torture is equal to the inhibition of sleep long continued; a pain to which the state of that man bears a very exact analogy, who dares never give rise to his vigilance and circumspection, but considers himself as surrounded by secret foes, and fears to intrust his children or his friend with the secret that throbs in his breast and the anxieties that break into his face. To avoid, at this expense, those evils to which easiness and friendship might have exposed him, is surely to buy safety at too dear a rate, and, in the language of the Roman satirist, to save life by losing all for which a wise man would live.*

When, in the diet of the German empire, as Camerarius relates, the princes were once displaying their felicity, and each boasting the advantages of his own dominion, one, who possessed a country

* *Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.*

not remarkable for the grandeur of its cities or the fertility of its soil, rose to speak, and the rest listened between pity and contempt, till he declared, in honour of his territories, that he could travel through them without a guard, and, if he was weary, sleep in safety upon the lap of the first man whom he should meet; a commendation which would have been ill exchanged for the boast of palaces, pastures, or streams.

Suspicion is not less an enemy to virtue than to happiness; he that is already corrupt is naturally suspicious, and he that becomes suspicious will quickly be corrupt. It is too common for us to learn the frauds by which ourselves have suffered; men who are once persuaded that deceit will be employed against them, sometimes think the same arts justified by the necessity of defence. Even they whose virtue is too well esteemed to give way to example or be shaken by sophistry, must yet feel their love of mankind diminished with their esteem, and grow less zealous for the happiness of those by whom they imagine their own happiness endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which suspicion has been strongly impressed by long intercourse with the world, inflexible and severe, not easily softened by submission, melted by complaint, or subdued by supplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited miseries and dissembled virtue in time overcomes that disposition to tenderness and sympathy which is so powerful in our younger years; and they that happen to petition the old for compassion or assistance, are doomed to languish without regard, and suffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeserving or ungrateful.

Historians are certainly chargeable with the depravation of mankind when they relate without censure those stratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his destruction.

A ship comes before a port, weather-beaten and shattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, supplying themselves with necessaries, or burying their dead. The humanity of the inhabitants inclines them to consent; the strangers enter the town with weapons concealed, fall suddenly upon their benefactors, destroy those that make resistance, and become masters of the place; they return home rich with plunder, and their success is recorded to encourage imitation.

But surely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with some regard to the universal interest of man. Those may justly be pursued as enemies to the community of nature, who suffer hostility to vacate the unalterable laws of right; and pursue their private advantage by means which, if once established, must destroy kindness, cut off from every man all hopes of assistance from another, and fill the world with perpetual suspicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be restored, and those who have conquered by such treachery may be justly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease, but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to invite robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to suppress tenderness by suspicion; it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

VOL. II.—B

WINTER.

"Behold yon mountain's hoary height
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the labouring woods below."

HOR.—DRYDEN'S *Trans.*

As Providence has made the human soul an active being, always impatient for novelty and struggling for something yet unenjoyed with unwearied progression, the world seems to have been eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning we watch the rising of the sun, and see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects in its gradual advance. After a few hours we see the shades lengthen and the light decline, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shining orbs different from each other in magnitude and splendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvests; the hill flatters with an extensive view, and the valley invites with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the golden age an exemption from the change of seasons and a perpetuity of spring; but I am not certain that in this state of imaginary happiness they have made sufficient provision for that insatiable demand of new gratifications, which seems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our sense of delight is in a great measure comparative, and arises at once from the sensations which we

feel and those which we remember: thus ease after torment is pleasure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural tepidity; but the joy ceases when we have forgotten the cold; we must fall below ease again if we desire to rise above it, and purchase new felicity by voluntary pain. It is therefore not unlikely that, however the fancy may be amused with the description of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no scenes are displayed but valleys enamelled with unfading flowers, and woods waving their perennial verdure, we should soon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languishing for want of other subjects, call on Heaven for our wonted round of seasons, and think ourselves liberally recompensed for the inconveniences of summer and winter by new perceptions of the calmness and mildness of the intermediate variations.

Every season has its particular power of striking the mind. The nakedness and asperity of the wintry world always fill the beholder with pensive and profound astonishment; as the variety of the scene is lessened, its grandeur is increased; and the mind is swelled at once by the mingled ideas of the present and the past, of the beauties which have vanished from the eyes, and the waste and desolation that are now before them.

It is observed by Milton, that he who neglects to visit the country in spring, and rejects the pleasures that are then in their first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of *sullenness against nature*. If we allot different duties to different seasons, he may be charged with equal disobedience to the voice of nature who looks on the bleak hills and leafless woods without seriousness and awe. Spring is the season of gaiety, and winter of terror; in spring the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the grove, and the eye of benevolence sparkles at the sight of hap-

piness and plenty. In the winter, compassion melts at universal calamity, and the tear of softness starts at the wailings of hunger and the cries of the creation in distress.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge heaviness and sorrow; nor do I recommend them beyond the degree necessary to maintain in its full vigour that habitual sympathy and tenderness which, in a world of so much misery, is necessary to the ready discharge of our most important duties. The winter, therefore, is generally celebrated as the proper season for domestic merriment and gayety. We are seldom invited by the votaries of pleasure to look abroad for any other purpose than that we may shrink back with more satisfaction to our coverts, and, when we have heard the howl of the tempest, and felt the gripe of the frost, congratulate each other with more gladness upon a close room, an easy chair, a large fire, and a smoking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and conversation. Differences, we know, are never so effectually laid asleep as by some common calamity: an enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the same fireside those who, by the opposition of inclinations or differences of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year; and when they have met, and find it their mutual interest to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wish for the continuance of the social season, with all its bleakness and all its severities.

To men of study and imagination the winter is generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and silence produce composure of mind and concentration of ideas; and the privation of external pleasure naturally causes an effort to find entertainment within. "This is the time in which those whom lit-

erature enables to find amusements for themselves have more than common convictions of their own happiness. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from most of the diversions which are called in to assist the flight of time, they can find new subject of inquiry, and preserve themselves from that weariness which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot, indeed, be expected of all to be poets and philosophers ; it is necessary that the greater part of mankind should be employed in the minute business of common life ; minute, indeed, not if we consider its influence upon our happiness, but if we respect the abilities requisite to conduct it. These must necessarily be more dependant on accident for the means of spending agreeably those hours which their occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on these I would willingly impress such a sense of the value of time as may incline them to find out for their careless hours amusements of more use and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but strengthen the passions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and to profusion, to corruption and to ruin. It is unworthy of a reasonable being to spend any of the little time allotted us without some tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our existence. And though every moment can not be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the stated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet none should be so spent as to exclude wisdom or virtue, or pass without possibility of qualifying us more or less for the better employment of those which are to come.

It is scarcely possible to pass an hour in honest conversation without being able, when we rise from it, to please ourselves with having given or received some advantage ; but a man may shuffle

cards or rattle dice from noon to midnight without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other token than gain or loss, and a confused remembrance of a tempestuous and clamorous altercations.

However, as experience is of more weight than precept, any of my readers who are contriving how to spend the dreary months before them may consider which of their past amusements fills them now with the greatest satisfaction, and resolve to repeat those gratifications of which the pleasure is most durable.

THE UNIVERSAL RULE OF CONDUCT.

“Hear, and be just.”

AMONG questions which have been discussed without any approach to decision may be numbered the precedence, or superior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty by zeal for its advancement and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alleged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as they are necessary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress; but which duty

ought to be most esteemed, we may continue to debate without inconvenience, so all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need: for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind; and controversies merely speculative are of small importance in themselves, however they may have sometimes heated a disputant or provoked a faction.

Of the Divine Author of our religion, it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories without observing how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he descended to satisfy curiosity than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well-meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot mistake the meaning but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us in our transactions with others is remarkably clear and comprehensive: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.* A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted as far as the private conscience requires to be informed; a law of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal principle, they have inquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are considered by us as the measure

of right, must be such as we approve, and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced as requiring some skill in the direction of conscience to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know that, if he was in the state of the suppliant, he should desire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is intrusted with the public safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is invested, gives away what is not his own, and apparently does to others what he would not that others should do to him. Even the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by those laws which regard the great republic of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security in which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason the state has not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited their lives by crimes against the laws of common morality, equally acknowledged by all nations, because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation in those by whom this great rule has been commented

and dilated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish, *debts of justice* and *debts of charity*. The immediate and primary intention of this precept is to establish a rule of justice; and I know not whether invention or sophistry can start a single difficulty to retard its application when it is thus expressed and explained, *Let every man allow the claim of right in another which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.*

The discharge of the *debts of charity*, or duties which we owe to others, not merely required by justice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits, in its own nature, greater complication of circumstances and greater latitude of choice. Justice is indispensably and universally necessary, and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform, and distinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion and equally needful to the conciliation of the Divine favour, is yet, for the most part, with regard to single acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow in the distribution of kindness something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule, therefore, is not equally determinate and absolute with respect to offices of kindness and acts of liberality; because liberality and kindness, absolute, determined, would lose their nature; for how could we be called tender or charitable for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold?

Yet, even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence, no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others suffer for want by considering how we should be affected in the same state; nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule than that of doing what we should then expect from

others. It indeed generally happens, that t and receiver differ in their opinions of gen the same partiality to his own interest incl to large expectations and the other to spa tributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human will scarcely suffer a man groaning under t sure of distress to judge rightly of the kind his friends, or think they have done enough deliverance is completed; not, therefore, we might wish, but what we could demand from we are obliged to grant, since, though we ca know how much we might claim, it is im to determine what we should hope.

But in all inquiries concerning the pra voluntary and occasional virtues, it is sa minds not oppressed with superstitious fear termine against their own inclinations, and themselves from deficiency by doing mo they believe strictly necessary. For of th man may be certain, that if he were to e conditions with his dependant, he should more than, with the utmost exertion of his he now will prevail upon himself to perfo when reason has no settled rule, and our are striving to mislead us, it is surely the p wise man to err on the side of safety.

EXERCISE INDISPENSABLE TO THE OF BODY AND VIGOUR OF MIND

"At busy hearts in vain Love's arrows fly;
Dimm'd, scorn'd, and impotent his torches lie

MANY writers of eminence in physic have their diligence upon the consideration of th

tempers to which men are exposed by particular states of life, and very learned treatises have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the sea, and the mines. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accustomed to anatomical inquiries and medical refinements would not find reasons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him that almost every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and safer than a life of sloth.

The necessity of action is not only demonstrable from the fabric of the body, but evident from observation of the universal practice of mankind, who, for the preservation of health in those whose rank or wealth exempts them from the necessity of lucrative labour, have invented sports and diversions, though not of equal use to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to those who practise them, and differing only from the drudgery of the husbandman or manufacturer as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful sense of compulsion. The huntsman rises early, pursues his game through all the dangers and obstructions of the chase, swims rivers and scales precipices, till he returns home no less harassed than the soldier, and has, perhaps, sometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or death; yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither subject to the commands of a general, nor dreads any penalties for neglect and disobedience; he has neither profit nor honour to expect from his perils and his conquests, but toils without the hope of mural or civic garlands, and must content himself with the praise of his tenants and companions.

But such is the constitution of man, that labour may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite if it be considered how much happiness is gained and how much misery escaped by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the utmost that can be hoped from a stationary and inactive habit; ease, a neutral state, between pain and pleasure. The dance of sport, the bound of vigour, readiness of enterprise, a dance of fatigue, are reserved for him that invigorates and nerves and hardens his fibres, that keeps him pliant with motion, and, by frequent exposures, fuses his frame against the common accident and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secure, the body would be content; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand. Ease, if it is not rising into indolence, will be falling towards pain; and whatever the dreams of speculation may suggest of the proportion between nutriment and excretion, and keeping the body in a healthy state by exactly equal to its waste, we know that the vital powers, unexcited by motion, grow languid; that, as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions most of those pains which wear us away, with periodical tortures, and which, though sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn us to useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that death to which we are decreed; but while the body continue united, it can make the approach of death less painful, and give probable hopes that the body may be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a maxim among the ancients, that acute disease comes from heaven and chronic from ourselves; that death indeed falls from heaven, but we bring it by our own misconduct; to die is natural to all men, but to die with lingering anguish is a mark of his folly.*

* This passage was once strangely supposed by some to recommend suicide instead of exercise, which is the more obvious meaning. See, however, a letter from Boswell on the subject, in "Boswell's Life," vol. iv., p. 1

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present state is capable, that the mind and body should both be kept in action; that neither the faculties of the one nor of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary submission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expense of that health which must enable it either to give pleasure to its possessor or assistance to others. It is too frequently the pride of students to despise those amusements and recreations which give to the rest of mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart. Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent with such skill in common exercises or sports as are necessary to make them practised with delight, and no man is willing to do that of which the necessity is not pressing and immediate when he knows that his awkwardness must make him ridiculous.

Thus the man of learning is often resigned, almost by his own consent, to languor and pain; and, while in the prosecution of his studies he suffers the weariness of labour, is subject by his course of life to the maladies of idleness.

It was, perhaps, from the observation of this mischievous omission in those who are employed about intellectual objects, that Locke has, in his "System of Education," urged the necessity of a trade to men of all ranks and professions, that, when the mind is weary with its proper task, it may be relaxed by a slighter attention to some mechanical operation; and that, while the vital functions are resuscitated and awakened by vigorous motion, the understanding may be restrained from that vagrancy and dissipation by which it relieves itself after a long intense ness of thought, unless some allurement be presented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is so little reason for expecting frequent
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conformity to Locke's precept, that it is not necessary to inquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occasion to petty emulation and degenerate ambition, and whether, if our divines were taught the lathe and the chisel, they would not think more of their tools than their books, as Nero neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too much pleased with little things ; but what is there that may not be perverted ? Let us remember how much worse employment might have been found for those hours which a manual occupation appears to engross ; let us compute the profit with the loss ; and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his studies, consider likewise that perhaps, by the same attractions, he is sometimes withheld from debauchery or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from lust.

I have always admired the wisdom of those by whom our female education was instituted, for having contrived that every woman, of whatever condition, should be taught some arts of manufacture by which the vacuities of recluse and domestic leisure may be filled up. These arts are more necessary, as the weakness of their sex and the general system of life debar ladies from many employments which, by diversifying the circumstances of men, preserve them from being cankered by the rust of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happiness of the world may be the consequence of this judicious regulation.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue ; and, though I have no extraordinary skill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governess, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous ensnaring of the soul, by enabling them-

selves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and with idleness her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows, and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed; and Hector in the Iliad, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terrors, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff.

It is certain that any wild wish or vain imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetic principle that *Nature abhors a vacuum*, may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace anything, however absurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of those desires that disturb his life and contaminate his conscience from some unhappy hour when too much leisure exposed him to their incursions; for he has lived with little observation either on himself or others who does not know that to be idle is to be vicious.

TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD: AN ALLEGORY.

“Truth in Platonic ornaments bedeck'd,
Enforced we love, unheeding recollect.”

It is reported of the Persians by an ancient writer, that the sum of their education consisted in teaching youth *to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth.*

The bow and the horse were easily mastered, but it would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what

preservatives a Persian mind was secured against the temptations to falsehood.

There are, indeed, in the present corruption of mankind, many incitements to forsake truth, the need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of imposing on the ignorance or credulity of others, so frequently occur; so many immediate evils are to be avoided, and so many present gratifications obtained by craft and delusion, that very few of those who are much entangled in life have spirit and constancy sufficient to support them in the steady practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to speak truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it; for no species of falsehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant by interest, and the friend by tenderness. Those who are neither servile nor timorous are yet desirous to bestow pleasure; and, while unjust demands of praise continue to be made, there will always be some whom hope, fear, or kindness will dispose to pay them.

The guilt of falsehood is very widely extended, and many, whom their conscience can scarcely charge with stooping to a lie, have vitiated the morals of others by their vanity, and patronised the vice which they believe themselves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for its own sake; it is generally displeasing, because contrary to our wishes and opposite to our practice; and as our attention naturally follows our interests, we hear unwillingly what we are afraid to know, and soon forget what we have no inclination to impress upon our memories.

For this reason, many arts of instruction have been invented, by which the reluctance against truth may be overcome; and as physic is given to children in confections, precepts have been hidden under a thousand appearances, that mankind may be bribed by pleasure to escape destruction.

While the world was yet in its infancy, Truth came among the mortals from above, and Falsehood from below. Truth was the daughter of Jupiter and Wisdom; Falsehood was the progeny of Folly, impregnated by the Wind. They advanced with equal confidence to seize the dominion of the new creation: and, as their enmity and their force were well known to the celestials, all the eyes of heaven were turned upon the contest.

Truth seemed conscious of superior power and juster claim, and therefore came on towering and majestic, unassisted and alone; Reason, indeed, always attended her, but appeared her follower rather than companion. Her march was slow and stately, but her motion was perpetually progressive; and, when once she had grounded her foot, neither gods nor men could force her to retire.

Falsehood always endeavoured to copy the mien and attitudes of Truth, and was very successful in the arts of mimicry. She was surrounded, animated, and supported by innumerable legions of appetites and passions; but, like other feeble commanders, was obliged often to receive law from her allies. Her motions were sudden, irregular, and violent; for she had no steadiness nor constancy. She often gained conquests by hasty incursions, which she never hoped to keep by her own strength, but maintained by the help of the passions, whom she generally found resolute and faithful.

It sometimes happened that the antagonists met in full opposition. In these encounters, Falsehood always invested her head with clouds, and commanded Fraud to place ambuses about her. In her left hand she bore the shield of Impudence, and the quiver of Sophistry rattled on her shoulder. All the passions attended at her call; Vanity clapped her wings before, and Obstinacy supported her behind. Thus guarded and assisted, she sometimes advanced against Truth, and sometimes waited the

attack; but always endeavoured to skirmish at a distance, perpetually shifted her ground, and let fly her arrows in different directions; for she certainly found that her strength failed whenever the eye of Truth darted full upon her.

Truth had the awful aspect, though not the thunder of her father; and, when the long continuance of the contest brought them near to one another, Falsehood let the arms of Sophistry fall from her grasp, and, holding up the shield of Impudence with both her hands, sheltered herself among the passions.

Truth, though she was often wounded, always recovered in a short time; but it was common for the slightest hurt received by Falsehood to spread its malignity to the neighbouring parts, and to burst open again when it seemed to have been cured.

Falsehood, in a short time, found by experience that her superiority consisted only in the celerity of her course and the changes of her posture. She therefore ordered Suspicion to beat the ground before her, and avoided with great care to cross the way of Truth, who, as she never varied her point, but moved constantly upon the same line, was easily escaped by the oblique and desultory movements, the quick retreats and active doubles which Falsehood always practised when the enemy began to raise terror by her approach.

By this procedure Falsehood every hour encroached upon the world, and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever she carried her victories, she left the passions in full authority behind her, who were so well pleased with command, that they held out with great obstinacy when Truth came to seize their posts, and never failed to retard her progress, though they could not always stop it; they yielded at last with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and sullen submission; and always inclined to revolt when Truth ceased to *swe them by her immediate presence.*

Truth, who, when she first descended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by universal acclamation, cherished with kindness, heard with obedience, and invited to spread her influence from province to province, now found that, wherever she came, she must force her passage. Every intellect was precluded by Prejudice, and every heart preoccupied by Passion. She indeed advanced, but she advanced slowly; and often lost the conquests which she left behind her by sudden insurrections of the appetites, that shook off their allegiance, and ranged themselves again under the banner of her enemy.

Truth, however, did not grow weaker by the struggle, for her vigour was unconquerable; yet she was provoked to see herself thus baffled and impeded by an enemy whom she looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but such as she owed to inconstancy, weakness, and artifice. She therefore, in the anger of disappointment, called upon her father Jupiter to re-establish her in the skies, and leave mankind to the disorder and misery which they deserved, by submitting willingly to the usurpation of Falsehood.

Jupiter compassionated the world too much to grant her request, yet was willing to ease her labours and mitigate her vexation. He commanded her to consult the Muses by what methods she might obtain an easier reception, and reign without the toil of incessant war. It was then discovered that she obstructed her own progress by the severity of her aspect and the solemnity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her till they ceased to fear her, since, by giving themselves up to Falsehood, they seldom made any sacrifice of their ease or pleasure, because she took the shape that was most engaging, and always suffered herself to be dressed and painted by Desire. The Muses wove, in the loom of Pallas, a loose and

changeable robe, like that in which Falsehood captivated her admirers; with this they invested Truth, and named her Fiction. She now went out again to conquer with more success; for, when she demanded entrance of the Passions, they often mistook her for Falsehood, and delivered up their charge: but, when she had once taken possession, she was soon disrobed by Reason, and shone out in her original form with native effulgence and resistless dignity.

THE OCEAN OF LIFE.

“With constant motion as the moments glide,
Behold in running life the rolling tide,
For none can stem by art or stop by power,
The flowing ocean or the fleeting hour;
But wave by wave pursued arrives on shore,
And each, impell'd behind, impels before:
So time on time revolving we descry;
So minutes follow, and so minutes fly.”

—OVID.—ELPHINSTON'S *Trans.*

“LIFE,” says Seneca, “is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasing part of old age.” The perusal of this passage having excited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into slumber amid my meditations, and, on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity: but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that we were launching out into the *ocean of life*; that we had already passed the straits of infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence of those who undertook to steer them; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choose among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness; and, first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure, but no sooner touched than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands all was darkness, nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on each side, was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist that the most perspicacious eye could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many who by false intelligence betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable; but, though it was impossible to sail against it or to

return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with much care or prudence; for, by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking round him; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed; nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course; if he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference or from weariness of their present condition; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction, failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him; and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage; so that every passenger was certain that, how long so ever he might, by favourable accidents or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been ex-

pected to sadden the gay and intimidate the daring, at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the solace of their labours ; yet, in effect, none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful ; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves ; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrors that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward, but found some amusement for the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with Hope, who was the constant associate of the voyage of life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was, not that they should escape, but that they should sink last ; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for seeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions ; for, in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she redoubled her assurances of safety ; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage than they whom all but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of life was the *Gulf of Intemperance*, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose, and with shades where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks all who sailed on the ocean of life must necessarily pass. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet by which they might escape ; but very few could, by her entreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should ap-

proach so near unto the rocks of Pleasure that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises as to venture her charge within the eddy of the Gulf of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulf was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk by slow degrees, after long struggles and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach of the Gulf of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some, indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow; but I remarked that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artists themselves continued longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that

they sunk later and more suddenly! for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the straits of infancy perish in the way, and at last were overtaken by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harassed themselves by labours that scarce Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown Power: "Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?" I looked, and, seeing the Gulf of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

THE INQUISITIVE MAN.

"They search the secrets of the house, and so
Are worshipp'd there, and fear'd for what they know."
Juv.—DRYDEN'S *Trans.*

CURIOSITY is one of the permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intellect. Every advance into knowledge opens new prospects and produces new incitements to farther progress. All the attainments possible in our present state are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment; conquest serves no purpose but that of kindling ambition, discovery has no effect but of raising expectation; the gratification of one desire encour-

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ages another; and, after all our labours, studies, and inquiries, we are continually at the same distance from the completion of our schemes, have still some wish importunate to be satisfied, and some faculty restless and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The desire of knowledge, though often animated by extrinsic and adventitious motives, seems on many occasions to operate without subordination to any other principle; we are eager to see and hear, without intention of referring our observations to a farther end; we climb a mountain for a prospect of the plain; we run to the strand in a storm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water; we range from city to city, though we profess neither architecture nor fortification; we cross seas only to view nature in nakedness, or magnificence in ruins; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind; by a desert or a palace, a cataract or a cavern; by everything rude and everything polished, everything great and everything little; we do not see a thicket but with some temptation to enter it, nor remark an insect flying before us but with an inclination to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and enlarged. Lucan therefore introduces Cæsar speaking with dignity suitable to the grandeur of his designs and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high-priest of Egypt that he has no desire equally powerful with that of finding the origin of the Nile, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a sight of those fountains which had been so long concealed. And Homer, when he would furnish the Sirens with a temptation to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, might yield without disgrace, makes them declare that none ever departed from them but with increase of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal acquire-

ment which may not be applied to some use, or which may not, at least, gratify pride with occasional superiority ; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind will find that, upon the first appearance of an object or the first start of a question, his inclination to a nearer view or more accurate discussion precedes all thoughts of profit or of competition ; and that his desires take wing by instantaneous impulse, though their flight may be invigorated or their efforts renewed by subsequent considerations. The gratification of curiosity rather frees us from uneasiness than confers pleasure ; we are more pained by ignorance than delighted by instruction. Curiosity is the thirst of the soul ; it inflames and torments us, and makes us taste everything with joy, however otherwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earliest searchers after knowledge must have proposed knowledge only as their reward ; and that science, though perhaps the nursling of interest, was the daughter of curiosity : for who can believe that they who first watched the course of the stars foresaw the use of their discoveries to the facilitation of commerce or the mensuration of time ? They were delighted with the splendour of the nocturnal skies ; they found that the lights changed their places ; what they admired they were anxious to understand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are, indeed, beings in the form of men who appear satisfied with their intellectual possessions, and seem to live without desire of enlarging their conceptions ; before whom the world passes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or art.

This negligence is sometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant passion ; a lover finds no inclination to travel any path but that which leads to the habitation of his mistress ; a trader can pay

little attention to common occurrences when his fortune is endangered by a storm. It is frequently the consequence of a total immersion in sensuality ; corporeal pleasures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happiness is obliterated ; the mind, long habituated to a lethargic and quiescent state, is unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking ; and, though she may sometimes be disturbed by the obtrusion of new ideas, shrinks back again to ignorance and rest.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual task of procuring the supports of life denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of such as live without the ardour of inquiry is very small, though many content themselves with cheap amusements, and waste their lives in researches of no importance.

There is no snare more dangerous to busy and excursive minds than the cobwebs of petty inquisitiveness, which entangle them in trivial employments and minute studies, and detain them in a middle state, between the tediousness of total inactivity and the fatigue of laborious efforts, enchant them at once with ease and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The necessity of doing something, and the fear of undertaking much, sinks the historian to a genealogist, the philosopher to a journalist of the weather, and the mathematician to a constructor of dials.

It is happy when those who cannot content themselves to be idle, nor resolve to be industrious, are at least employed without injury to others ; but it seldom happens that we can contain ourselves long in a neutral state, or forbear to sink into vice when we are no longer soaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was distinguished in his earlier years by an uncommon liveliness of imagination, quickness of sagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life he applied himself with particu-

lar inquisitiveness to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different modifications of interest or ambition, and the various causes of miscarriage and success both in public and private affairs.

Though his friends did not discover to what purpose all these observations were collected, or how Nugaculus would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an incessant attention to changes of countenance, bursts of inconsideration, sallies of passion, and all the other casualties by which he used to trace a character, yet they could not deny the study of human nature to be worthy of a wise man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his discoveries, and listened with submissive modesty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakness of resolves, and the instability of temper; to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling passion.

Such was the first incitement of Nugaculus to a close inspection into the conduct of mankind. He had no interest in view, and, therefore, no desire of supplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expose them: but, having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himself, but has passed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every rising character, and lived upon a small estate without any thought of increasing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general master of secret history, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and stratagems of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's estate, the terms upon which every spendthrift raises his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure stipulated by every contract, and the expectations of

every family from maiden aunts and childless acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every house, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his steward; he can tell where the manor-house is falling, though large sums are yearly paid for repairs, and where the tenants are felling woods without the consent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence he is inadvertently guilty of a thousand acts of treachery. He sees no man's servant without draining him of his trust; he enters no family without flattering the children into discoveries; he is a perpetual spy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows, by long experience, at whatever distance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, &c.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and therefore his industry has not hitherto been very mischievous to others or dangerous to himself: but, since he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by discovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffic like the chymists, and purchase one secret with another, he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is considered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happiness in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at first, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declension to minuteness, betrayed Nugaculus not only to a foolish, but vicious waste of a life which might have been honourably passed in public services or domestic virtues. He has lost his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engross, but do not improve it.

FRUGALITY IN THE USE OF TIME.

"Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise :
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream which stopp'd him should be gone,
That runs, and, as it runs, for ever will run on."

HOR.—COWLEY's *Trans.*

An ancient poet, unreasonably discontented at the present state of things, which the system of opinions obliged him to represent in its worst form, has observed of the earth, "that its greater part is covered by the uninhabited ocean; that of the rest some is encumbered with naked mountains, and some lost under barren sands; some scorched with unintermittent heat, and some petrified with perpetual frost; so that only a few regions remain for the production of fruits, the pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of man."

The same observation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our present state. When we have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyranny of custom; all that passes in regulating the superficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments; many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day; and a great part of

our existence serves no other purpose than enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left at disposal, it may reasonably be expected that we be so frugal as to let none of them slip without some equivalent: and perhaps it found, that, as the earth, however straitened and waters, is capable of producing more its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives much contracted by incidental distractions, yet afford us a large space vacant to the of reason and virtue; that we want not diligence, for great performances; and squander much of our allowance, even think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary communition of lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of the diligence with which we suffer them to slip. We never consider ourselves as possessed of time sufficient for any great design, a fore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amusements. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage; which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable that, either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain size, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive objects we can only take a survey, as the parts are too numerous to be comprehended in one another; and atoms we cannot perceive, because they are united into masses. Thus we take up vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of money required for any purpose, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal fortune is by small expenses, by the profuse use of

sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires which, if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantic and stupendous intelligences who are said to grasp a system by intuition, and bound forward from one series of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient; and it is only necessary that, whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquests, and forbears another incursion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company or in solitude, in necessary business or in voluntary levities, the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of inquiry; but perhaps, if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity than when it is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this it has probably preceded, that among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence in opposition to all the obstacles which external circumstances could place in their way, amid the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life of Erasmus was one continual peregrination; ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment—hopes which always flattered and always deceived him—he yet found means, by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life that

he has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he sufficiently discovers, by informing us that the "Praise of Folly," one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on his road to Italy, lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattered away without regard to literature.

An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto that *time was his estate*; an estate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for show rather than for use.

THOUGHTS ON REPENTANCE.

" We through this maze of life one Lord obey,
Whose light and grace, unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith, secure of future bliss,
Gladly the joys of present life we miss :
For baffled mortals still attempt, in vain,
Present and future bliss at once to gain."

PRUDENTIUS.—F. LEWIS'S *TRANS.*

THAT to please the Lord and Father of the Universe is the supreme interest of created and dependant beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and, since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected

or punished by God has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes and renovation of the forfeited hopes of the Divine favour, therefore, constitute a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least show the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the Divine nature. That God will forgive, may indeed be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion; for, though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of Him whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator whom he must consider as a governor too pure to be pleased and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence; and, therefore, the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair, from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness, to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue whom their passions had solicited aside, and animated to new attempts and firmer perseverance those whom difficulty had discouraged or negligence surprised.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments, either by commerce or tradition,

tion, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporeal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel some inclination towards exterior acts and ritual observances. Ideas not represented by sensible objects are fleeting, variable, and evanescent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our thoughts, but as it is recorded by some certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once establish the necessary proportion between crimes and sufferings, might securely rest upon his performance of the expiation; but, while safety remains the reward only of moral purity, he is always afraid lest he should decide too soon in his own favour; lest he should not have felt the pangs of true contrition; lest he should mistake satiety for detestation, or imagine that his passions are subdued when they are only sleeping.

From this natural and reasonable diffidence arose, in humble and timorous piety, a disposition to confound penance with repentance, to repose on human determinations, and to receive from some judicial sentence the stated and regular assignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without resource; we seek in the knowledge of others a succour for our own ignorance, and are ready to trust any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain, by some outward marks, the state of the soul, and this willingness to calm the conscience by some settled method, have produced, as they are diversified in their effects by various tempers and principles, most of the disquisi-

tions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence; and these rules, corrupted by fraud or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet they are too closely connected with it to be easily separated; for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger, considered as imminent, naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terror is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will ban-

ish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror or panting with security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the Divine favour, and every danger more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation!

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This, at least, is evidence that every one retires whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions; and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only question in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and roused, by which the attractions of pleasure are interrupted, and the chains of sensuality are broken. It is observed by one of the fathers, that *he who restrains himself in the use of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden.* Abstinence, if nothing more, is at least a cautious retreat from the utmost verge of permission, and confers that security which cannot be reasonably hoped by him that dares always to hov-

er over the precipice of destruction, or delights to approach the pleasures which he knows it fatal to partake. Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence ; the diseases of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse if we dreaded guilt as we dreaded pain.

The completion and sum of repentance is a change of life. That sorrow which dictates no caution ; that fear which does not quicken our escape ; that austerity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But sorrow and terror must naturally precede reformation ; for what other cause can produce it ? He, therefore, that feels himself alarmed by his conscience, anxious for the attainment of a better state, and afflicted by the memory of his past faults, may justly conclude that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope, by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of strengthening his conviction, to impress upon his mind such a sense of the Divine presence as may overpower the blandishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and temptation.

“ What better can we do, than prostrate fall
Before Him reverent ; and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign’d and humiliation meek ? ”

YOUTHFUL IMPATIENCE AND PRESUMPTION REPROVED.

“Disaster always waits on early wit.”

IT has been observed by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the most part liberally recompensed by the exuberance and secundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts and nocturnal frosts which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the germe, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persuading the young and sprightly part of my readers, upon whom the spring naturally forces my attention, to learn, from the great process of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between speed and precipitation; to prosecute their designs with calmness, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprise and hope: having yet no occasion of comparing our force with any opposing power, we naturally form presumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obstruction and impediment will give way before us. The first repulses rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it suspects its own weakness, or submits to sap the difficulties which it expected to subdue by storm. Before disappointments have enforced the dictates of philosophy, we believe it in

our power to shorten the interval between the first cause and the last effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding industry, and fancy that, by increasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of our schemes and a long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass; but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurrence, or drowsy equilibriations of undetermined counsel: whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts that the time of trifling is past.

A perpetual conflict with natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recall the fire and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be borne at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from

the importunities of a new desire. Yet, since the fear of missing what we seek must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation often raises his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by some even to the gift of nature; and an opinion has been conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions from instances which, by their own nature, must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed that, after a short effort, they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It frequently happens that applause abates diligence. Whoever finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival whom he imagines himself able to leave

behind whenever he shall again summon his forces to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention and weaken constancy ; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage ; pleasures which he conceives inexhaustible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or considered as inseparable from an early display of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly escaped by prudence and resolution, and must therefore be accounted rather as consolations to those who are less liberally endowed, than as discouragements to such as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the persecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raise the flames of unlawful love ; yet, among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniences of an amiable form ? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms ?

Neither grace of person nor vigour of understanding are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as means of happiness indulged by the Supreme Benefactor ; but the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have sud-

denly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependance. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest, perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed; the years of youth of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction than in that part of life when we need it most; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome; and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform; and, as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

EXCESSIVE CARE ABOUT TRIFLES.

“Of strength pernicious to myself I boast;
The powers I have were given me to my cost.”

OVID.—F. LEWIS’s *Trans.*

We are taught by Celsus that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the successions of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quan-

ties and uniform periods, is disordered smallest irregularity; and, since we cannot every day by the balance or barometer, sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, may be able to comply with necessary strong inclinations. He that too long of nice punctualities, condemns himself to imbecility, and will not long escape the of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally nec to intellectual health, and to a perpetual su bility of occasional pleasure. Long confi to the same company, which perhaps simili taste brought first together, quickly contra faculties, and makes a thousand things of that are in themselves indifferent; a man, tomed to hear only the echo of his own sent soon bars all the common avenues of delig has no part in the general gratification of m

In things which are not immediately su religious or moral consideration, it is dar to be too long or too rigidly in the right. bility may, by an incessant attention to el and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness sistent with the condition of humanity; irrit the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by tlest touch. He that pleases himself too with minute exactness, and submits to end thing in accommodations, attendance, or : below the point of perfection, will, when enters the crowd of life, be harassed with merable distresses from which those who h in the same manner increased their sensatio ne disturbance. His exotic softness will st the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plan planted to northern nurseries from the de sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval b practical and ideal excellence; and therefor

allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any error or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that, exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolorations. The perceptions, as well as the senses, may be improved to our own disquiet; and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, show us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would perhaps very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy: for it is the privilege only of deep reflection or lively fancy to destroy happiness by art and refinement. But, by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become sufficiently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any association but with those that will watch their nod and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extending beyond

the instincts of animal life ; but, unhappily, he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long cessation of anger. There are many veterans of luxury upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration ; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought or so unskillfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood ; and, in the transports of resentment, make very little distinction between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependance on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority, the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty ; and, kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence the obsequiousness of half a life, and, as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade and retired into the country ; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions ; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank ; cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle ; and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of the family, and overtaking his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection or elevation of sentiment ; and, therefore, readily complied with every variety of caprice ; particularly endured contradictory reproofs ; heard false accusations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply ; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth rep-

etition of a joke; asked questions about the universal decay of trade; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted; and behaved with such prudence and circumspection, that after six years the will was made, and *Juvenculus* was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterward, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him; the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are imbibited by age or solitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and spiteful superintendence of domestic trifles. *Eriphile* has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths, and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleasure nor aspiration after virtue while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass and wainscot from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcilable enemy to one, because she broke off a tulip with her hoop; to another, because she spilled her coffee on a Turkey carpet; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits because company makes a house dirty; and resolves to confine herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow minds, and, except when it is the effect of anguish and disease, by which the resolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the lightest addition to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasonable persuasion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of suffering perturbation and uneasiness from causes unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies or offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the least: some surpass our power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding; and such is the limitation of the human powers, that, by attention to trifles, we let things of importance pass unobserved: when we examine a mite with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, will need little proof: that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions which make him uneasy to himself and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects and obstruct his improvement.

PUNISHMENT SHOULD BE PROPORTIONED TO CRIME.

"When man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate."
Juv.—DRYDEN'S *Trans.*

POWER and superiority are so flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and exposed to danger as they are, scarcely any virtue is so cautious or any prudence so timorous as to decline them. Even those that have most reverence for the laws of right are pleased with shewing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour, and would be thought to comply rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wish to pass; and, as the Roman satirist remarks, he that has no design to take the life of another is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignity of command to dispute and expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its way into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely

be believed to have been produced by public wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of public happiness.

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, "Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than me?" On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those who crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection. For who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others than the theft of a piece of money?

It has always been the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to attempt its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frightened into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them,

not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little success that rapine and violence are hourly increasing; yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrific punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardon; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that we can only be rescued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour and sanguinary justice.

Yet, since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havoc of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, *of dreadful things the most dreadful*; an evil beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror should therefore be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished

with death, very few robbers would stain their hands with blood; but when, by the last act of cruelty, no new danger is incurred and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be observed that all but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour. From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing compared with his misery; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment; nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced,

so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I knew not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful or less extensive.

If those whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits; they might have escaped all the temptations to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence; and detected they might all have been, had the prosecutors been certain that their lives would have been spared. I believe every thief will confess that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured upon capital crimes because he knew that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual, unless some will inform and some will prosecute; but, till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death, especially when he remembers that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of public

justice are indeed strong, but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderness for life. What is punished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution will be seldom discovered; and multitudes will be suffered to advance from crime to crime till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice, that I might reasonably fear to expose it to the public could it be supported only by my own observations. I shall therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that attention which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy.

NOURADIN AND ALMAMOULIN: AN EASTERN TALE.

“True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false, mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profess'd,
Disdains to number with the bless'd
Phraates, by his slaves adored,
And to the Parthian crown restored.”

HOR.—FRANCIS'S *Trans.*

IN the reign of Jenghiz Can, conqueror of the East, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India for the extent of his commerce and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful hasted to

his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages ; the sea was covered with his ships ; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wasted wealth to Nouradin.

At length, Nouradin felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterward to relieve by luxury and indulgence ; but, finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physic : they filled his apartments with alexipharmics, restoratives, and essential virtues ; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes ; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered, with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends ; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languor, he called to him Almameulin, his only son, and, dismissing his attendants, " My son," says he, " behold here the weakness and fragility of man ; look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain ; the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence beheld me, and sighed : His root, she cried, is fixed in the depths ; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus ; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast ; prudence reclines against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his top. Now, Almamoulin, look upon me, withering and prostrate ; look upon me, and attend. I

have trafficked, I have prospered, I have riot gain; my house is splendid, my servants ar merous; yet I displayed only a small part c riches; the rest, which I was hindered from e ing by the fear of raising envy or tempting ri ty, I have piled in towers, I have buried in cav I have hidden in secret repositories, which scroll will discover. My purpose was, afte months more spent in commerce, to have drawn my wealth to a safer country; to given seven years to delight and festivity, an remaining part of my days to solitude and re ance: but the hand of death is upon me; a rific torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am leaving the produce of my toil, which it mt thy business to enjoy with wisdom." The th of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with grief that he fell into convulsions, became c ous, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was tor a while with honest sorrow, and sat two ho profound meditation, without perusing the which he held in his hand. He then retired t own charmer, as overborne with affliction, there read the inventory of his new posses which swelled his heart with such transports he no longer lamented his father's death. He now sufficiently composed to order a funer modest magnificence, suitable at once to the of Nouradin's profession and the reputation c wealth. The two next nights he spent in vi the tower and the caverns, and found the trea greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice c act frugality, and had often looked with envy c finery and expenses of other young men: he t fore believed that happiness was now in his p since he could obtain all of which he had hit been accustomed to regret the want. He res

to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: He put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but a princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion, and disdained him: How, says she, dares the wretch hope my obedience who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestic pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time, but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters mur-

mured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted ; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies ; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute and the voice of the singer chased away sadness ; every hour was crowded with pleasure ; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. - Almamoulin cried out, " I have at last found the use of riches ; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy ; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure ? What danger can he dread to whom every man is a friend ? "

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly regaling at his expense ; but, in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and, in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood a while aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation ; yet, unpatronised and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence and the consistence of truth ; he was dismissed with honour, and his *accuser perished in prison.*

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses ; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who, after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. " Brother," said the philosopher, " thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them, and to expect from them what experience has now taught thee that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayst be convinced by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain who stood trembling at Astracan before a being not naturally superior to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces and neglected gardens will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless ; there are purposes to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them ; they may, by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease, still the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve innocence from oppression, and raise imbecility to cheerfulness and vigour. This they will enable thee to perform, and this will afford the only happiness ordained for our present state, the confidence of Divine favour, and the hope of future rewards."

Vol. II.—G

CAUSES OF RELAXATION OF EFFORT AS WE ADVANCE IN LIFE.

"Succeeding years thy early fame destroy ;
Thou, who began'st a man, will end a boy."

OVID.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But, whatever was his intent, it is remarked by Scaliger, he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of his life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who, at their first entrance into the world, were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised, and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniences of old age which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added the loss of fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable pursuit may be compared to the progress of a body driven by a blow. It moves for a time with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the first impulse is perpetually decreasing, and, though it should encounter no obstacle capable of quelling it by a sudden stop, the resistance of the medium through which it passes, and the latent in-

equalities of the smoothest surface will, in a short time, by continued retardation, wholly overpower it. Some hinderances will be found in every road of life, but he that fixes his eyes upon anything at a distance necessarily loses sight of all that fills up the intermediate space, and therefore sets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor suspects a thousand obstacles by which he afterward finds his passage embarrassed and obstructed. Some are indeed stopped at once in their career by a sudden shock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the cross impulse of some violent passion; but far the greater part languish by slow degrees, deviate at first into slight obliquities, and themselves scarcely perceive at what time their ardour forsook them, or when they lost sight of their original design.

Weariness and negligence are perpetually prevailing by silent encroachments, assisted by different causes, and not observed till they cannot, without great difficulty, be opposed. Labour necessarily requires pauses of ease and relaxation, and the deliciousness of ease commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We perhaps prevail upon ourselves to renew our attempts, but eagerly listen to every argument for frequent interpositions of amusement; for, when indolence has once entered upon the mind, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of industry to be equally endangered by miscarriage and success, by confidence and despondency. He that engages in a great undertaking with a false opinion of its facility or too high conceptions of his own strength, is easily discouraged by the first hinderance of his advances, because he had promised himself an equal and perpetual progression, without impediment or disturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the state of a man surprised by a tempest, where

he purposed only to bask in the calm or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprise greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborne by clamour; that, in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled; that others have ceased their curiosity, and considered every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name as an intruder upon their retreat and disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicitly to every report which hatred disseminates or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the public has in almost every man an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must quicken the frigid and soften the obdurate, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that, when the prospect of reward has vanished, the zeal of enterprise should cease; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren? He who hath pleased himself with anticipated praises, and expected that he should meet in every

with patronage or friendship, will soon remit your when he finds that from those who do be considered as his admirers, nothing can ped but cold civility, and that many refuse to his excellence, lest they should be too justly ed to reward it.

man thus cut off from the prospect of that port which his address and fortitude had been em-| d to steer him, often abandons himself to e and to the wind, and glides carelessly and own the current of life, without resolution to another effort, till he is swallowed up by the of mortality.

ers are betrayed to the same desertion of selves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of ibal that he wanted nothing to the completion of martial virtues but that, when he had gained ory, he should know how to use it. The folly sisting too soon from successful labours, and aste of enjoying advantages before they are ed, are often fatal to men of impetuous desire, in whose consciousness of uncommon powers em with presumption, and who, having borne ition down before them, and left emulation g behind, are early persuaded to imagine that have reached the heights of perfection, and that being no longer in danger from competitors, nay pass the rest of their days in the enjoy- of their acquisitions, in contemplation of their superiority, and in attention to their own s, and look unconcerned from their eminence the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

is not sufficiently considered in the hour of ex- on, that all human excellence is comparative; o man performs much but in proportion to others accomplish, or to the time and oppor- es which have been allowed him; and that he stops at any point of excellence is every day g in estimation, because his improvement

grows continually more incommensurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himself, they who have once been justly celebrated imagine that they still have the same pretensions to regard, and seldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorse; for if the spendthrift's poverty be imbibited by the reflection that he once was rich, how must the idler's obscurity be clouded by remembering that he once had lustre!

These errors all arise from an original mistake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praises or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applause. But the consideration that life is only deposited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a Master who will regard his endeavours, not his success, would have preserved him from trivial elations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation nor intimidated by censure.

CONFIDENCE IN OUR OWN POWERS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS.

"Now Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,
A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind !
Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand ;
Thine, Minos, is the main, and thine the land.
The skies are open—let us try the skies ;
Forgive, great Jove, the daring enterprise."—OVID.

MORALISTS, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeav-

ouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondary knowledge which books afford; and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I discover why else we have been warned against only a part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of error and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topics of moral declamation may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burdens which she had laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

Their remarks are too just to be disputed and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorific wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for, though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though, therefore, danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery

and disgrace, yet it may be justly required of us not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger, which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of suicide ; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity ; and, according to the inclinations of nature or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path, which it is every man's duty to find and to keep, is unanimously confessed ; but it is likewise acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed ; the care, therefore, of all those who conduct others has been, that, whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has been generally censured ; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which, therefore, great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds ; the exuberance of magnanimity and the ebullition of genius ; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of presupposing impossibilities and anticipating frustration, I know not whether

many would not have been roused to usefulness, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interests from those of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger; but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confess, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and, therefore, frequently presumes to attempt what he can never accomplish; but it ought likewise to be remembered, that man is no less ignorant of his own powers, and might, perhaps, have accomplished a thousand designs which the prejudice of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that *Power is never far from necessity*. The vigour of the human mind quickly appears when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesitation; when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some resistless passion. We then soon discover that difficulty is, for the most part the daughter of idleness; that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real because we durst not advance to a close examination; and we learn

that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure or perseverance perform.

But, whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have deposited in him before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away despair cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked, undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossible, and therefore would never have been attempted had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add something, however little, every one may hope; and of every honest endeavour it is certain that, however unsuccessful, it will be at last rewarded.

LOSS OF YOUTHFUL BEAUTY.

“ Not faster in the summer’s ray
The spring’s frail beauty fades away,
Than anguish and decay consume
The smiling virgin’s rosy bloom ;
Some beauty’s snatch’d each day, each hour ;
For beauty is a fleeting flower :
Then how can wisdom e’er confide
In beauty’s momentary pride ?”

SENECA.—ELPHINSTON’s *Trans.*

To the Rambler.

You have very lately observed, that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own ; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before our eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well-disposed colours or harmonious sounds can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing or of sight.

I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have, on so many occasions, discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that, though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or, without the help of some female speculatist, be able to understand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect anything earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily ad-

vanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion or disproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face but that her eyes were without lustre; how much another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar or stain me with a freckle; she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle: but she would scarcely suffer me to eat lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk lest I should swell my ankle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to sleep till I had passed through the cosmetic discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and

May dews ; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples and clear dis-colorations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks : but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that approached me.

My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of my natural excellences as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered as necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr. Ariet used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display in the open world those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties or domestic assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a public night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving anything to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position ; every friend was consulted about the colour of my

dress, and the mantuamakers were harassed with directions and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars have told me of a Spartan matron, who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his shield or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion, of equal glory, with a command to show that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received, like other pleasing novelties, with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person or the elegance of his address crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes, and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the reptile who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchain'd for ever.

My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I

seem to give the preference. But, having steadily and industriously instructed to prevent heart from any impressions which might me from consulting my interest, I acted with embarrassment, because my choice was regul y principles more clear and certain than the of approbation. When I had singled out om the rest as more worthy of encourage- I proceeded in my measures by the rules and yet, when the ardour of the first visits ent, generally found a sudden declension of luence; I felt in myself the want of some to diversify amusement and enliven conver- and could not but suspect that my mind failed orming the promises of my face. This opin- s soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who d Lavinia with less beauty and fortune than because he thought a wife ought to have qual- hich might make her amiable when her bloom st.

vanity of my mother would not suffer her to er any defect in one that had been formed by structions, and had all the excellence which rself could boast. She told me that nothing ch hindered the advancement of women as ire and wit, which generally frightened away that could make the best settlements, and bout them a needy tribe of poets and philoso- that filled their heads with wild notions of t, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. erefore enjoined me to improve my minuet- ith a new French dancing-master, and wait ent of the next birthnight.

I now almost completed my nineteenth year; charms had lost any of their softness, it was han compensated by additional dignity; and attractions of innocence were impaired, their was supplied by the arts of allurement. I was re preparing for a new attack, without any

abatement of my confidence, when, in the midst of my hopes and schemes, I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflection, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty; and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her charms had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my strength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me that, with care, I might, perhaps, become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstasy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for, after a thousand trifling inquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally

concluded, with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition ; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemn me to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness ; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new skin. The cosmetic science was exhausted upon me ; but who can repair the ruins of nature ? My mother was forced to give me rest at last, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune she considered as a hopeless game, no longer worthy of solicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the sudden blast of disease wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed sufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power ; of all that elated her pride or animated her activity ; all that filled her days with pleasure and her nights with hope ; all that gave gladness to the present hour or brightened her prospects of futurity. It is, perhaps, not in the power of a man whose attention has been divided by diversity of pursuits, and who has not been accustomed to derive from others much of his happiness, to image to himself such helpless destitution, such dismal inanity. Every object of pleasing contemplation is at once snatched away, and the soul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no

more. All is gloomy privation or impotent desire; the faculties of anticipation slumber in despondency, or the powers of pleasure mutiny for employment.

I was so little able to find entertainment for myself, that I was forced in a short time to venture abroad, as the solitary savage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of disgrace into assemblies where I had lately sparkled with gayety and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence; but the first circle of visits convinced me that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practise the glance of command or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard and my proposals were unregarded; the narrowness of my knowledge and the meanness of my sentiments were easily discovered when the eyes were no longer engaged against the judgment; and it was observed by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long considered all who approached me as vassals condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was, in less than three weeks, reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation; to catch with eagerness at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependance, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfall was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by some I have been told, in express terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that would smooth the skin, and another offered me her chair, that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own, and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well-bred malignity; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day rose upon me without an engagement, and the evening closed in its natural

gloom without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to melancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than receive assistance. "We must distinguish," said she, "my Victoria, those evils which are imposed by Providence, from those to which we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of your calamity, a small part is the infliction of Heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion of idle discontent. You have lost that which may, indeed, sometimes contribute to happiness, but to which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of the human race never have possessed; what those on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess in vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew not how to use; you have only lost early what the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and while you have time to substantiate more valuable and more durable excellences. Consider yourself, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to reason, and to act; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you will find that there are other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools."

TEMPTATIONS TO WRONG IN THE PUR-SUIT OF WEALTH.

" Still follow where auspicious fates invite ;
Caress the happy, and the wretched slight.
Sooner shall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than interest with right."

LUCAN.—F. LEWIS's *Trans.*

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, amid the innumerable varieties of inclination that nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring than in the wish for riches ; a wish, indeed, so prevalent, that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the desire in which all other desires are included, and of which the various purposes which actuate mankind are only subordinate species and different modifications.

Wealth is the general centre of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterward diverge in numberless directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate design, the immediate care is to be rich ; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth, therefore, all unanimously confess the value, nor is there any disagreement but about the use.

No desire can be formed which riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his happiness in splendid equipage or numerous dependants, in refined praise or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curiosities or the revels of luxury, in splendid edifices or wide plantations, must still, either by birth or acquisition, possess riches. They may be considered as the elemental principles of pleas-

ure, which may be combined with endless diversion, as the essential and necessary substance, of which only the form is left to be adjusted by choice.

The necessity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almost every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that the tides have vied in arts by which life is furnished with accommodations, and which, therefore, a kind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy if this predominant petite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were anxious to deserve what they were eager to possess; had abilities to improve their own fortunes by tributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth who can only procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining wealth, which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little inquiry will discover that there are never ways to profit than through the intricacies of a life; up the steeps of labour; what wisdom and virtue scarcely receive at the close of life, as the recompence of long toil and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of subtlety and dishonesty by a few expeditious and compendious measures: the weak of credulity is an open prey to falsehood; and the possessions of ignorance and imbecility are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifices or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover that riches always procure protection for themselves; that they

dazzle the eyes of inquiry, divert the celebrity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestably known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to inquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption; but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterward supported by favour and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the certainty of obtaining, by every accession of advantage, an addition of security, have so far prevailed upon the passions of mankind, that the peace of life is destroyed by a general and incessant struggle for riches. It is observed of gold, by an old epigrammatist, that *to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in sorrow*. There is no condition which is not disquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political estimate between those who are practising fraud and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present state of the world, it will be found that all confidence is lost among mankind; that no man ventures to act where money can be endangered on the faith of another. It is impossible to see the long scrolls in which every contract is concluded, with all their appendages of seals and attestation, without wondering at the depravity of those beings, who must be restrained from violation of promise by such formal and public evidences, and precluded from equivocation and subterfuge by such punctilious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly and wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe with a bond or a settlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the first view irreconcilable with the laws of virtue; some are openly

flagitious, and practised not only in the neglect, but in defiance of faith and justice; and the rest are on every side so entangled with dubious tendencies and so beset with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of those who are not yet abandoned, are able to preserve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteristics of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of possessions: strife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent passion was stilled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but such times can return no more. Community of possession must include spontaneity of production; for what is obtained by labour will be of right the property of him by whose labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleasure or to affluence must be procured either by slow industry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incites to more safe and more speedy methods, who strive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to share the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In latter ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is exposed, while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have suppressed desire by cutting off the possibility of gratification, and secured their peace by destroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet subjection. But, by debarring themselves from evil, they have rescinded many opportunities of good: they have too often sunk into inactivity and uselessness; and, though they have forborne to injure

society, have not fully paid their contributions to its happiness.

While riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual impulse of covetousness by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance when weighed only against reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the opposition scale is charged with justice, veracity, and purity.

EVILS OCCASIONED BY PROCRASTINATION.

“Who knows if Heaven, with ever-bounteous power,
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour?”
HOR.—FRANCIS’s *Trans.*

I SAT yesterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various subjects that occurred to my imagination, I should bestow the paper of to-day. After a short effort of meditation, by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irresolute; my ideas wandered from the first intention, and I rather wished to think, than thought, upon any settled subject; till at last I was awoken from this dream of study by a summons from the press; the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purposing to provide, and, however dubious or sluggish, I was now necessitated to write.

Though, to a writer whose design is so comprehensive and miscellaneous that he may accommodate himself with a topic from every scene of life

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or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his task to be obliged to a sudden composition, yet I could not forbear to reproach myself for having so long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleness increased the difficulty. There was, however, some pleasure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was necessary, might still congratulate myself upon my superiority to multitudes who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can, by no degree of activity or resolution, recover the opportunities which have slipped away; and who are condemned by their own carelessness to hopeless calamity and barren sorrow.

The folly of allowing ourselves to delay what we know cannot be finally escaped, is one of the general weaknesses which, in spite of the instruction of moralists and the remonstrances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind; even they who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of the passions; always renewing its attacks, and, though often vanquished, never destroyed.

It is, indeed, natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is, by its nearness, enabled to make the strongest impressions. When, therefore, any sharp pain is to be suffered or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want, and are easily persuaded that the moment of necessity which we desire never to arrive is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolution which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely hope to keep, and

reconciling ourselves to our own cowardice by excuses which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is, by the continual contemplation of misery, hourly impaired ; every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion : we not only waste that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but, even where procrastination produces no absolute increase of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wise to contract the interval of expectation ; to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly ; and suffer only their real malignity, without the conflicts of doubt and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer ; yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiae*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetic punishment, was somewhat to be pitied, because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand ; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief ?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints ; murmurs at uneasiness which only vacancy and suspicion expose them to feel, and complaints of distresses which it is in their power to remove. Laziness is commonly associated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infusing despair of success, or the frequent failure of irresolute struggles, and the constant desire of avoiding labour, impress by degrees false terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full possession of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon visions of calamity ; such as, if they

are not dissipated by useful employment, will soon overcast it with horrors, and imbitter life not only with those miseries by which all earthly beings are really more or less tormented, but with those which do not yet exist, and which can only be discerned by the perspicacity of cowardice.

Among all who sacrifice future advantage to present inclination, scarcely any gain so little as those that suffer themselves to freeze in idleness. Others are corrupted by some enjoyment of more or less power to gratify the passions; but to neglect our duties merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded is surely to sink under weak temptations. Idleness never can secure tranquillity; the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard; and, though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from sleep. Those moments which he cannot resolve to make useful by devoting them to the great business of his being, will still be usurped by powers that will not leave them to his disposal; remorse and vexation will seize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is so desirous to appropriate.

There are other causes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute discernment. He to whom many objects of pursuit arise at the same time, will frequently hesitate between different desires till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his

attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage and possibilities of improvements, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications and refine niceties till he is entangled in his own scheme and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and study Palladio, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependant and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection will not easily be content without it; and, since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true that no diligence can ascertain success; death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honest undertaking has at least the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he missed the victory.

DESCRIPTION OF SQUIRE BLUSTER.

"A giant shepherd here his flock maintains,
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclined :
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous ! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature or in face."

HOMER.—POPE's *Trans.*

HAVING been accustomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation of Eugenio, who has an estate and seat in a distant county. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to please ourselves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal spring, criticised every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and compared every scene of action with the narratives of historians. By this succession of amusements we enjoyed the exercise of a journey without suffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that, by a progress so leisurely and gentle, we missed the adventures of a postchaise, and the pleasure of alarming villages with the tumult of our passage, and of disguising our insignificance by the dignity of hurry.

The first week after our arrival at Eugenio's house was passed in receiving visits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerness of benevolence; some impatient to learn the news of the court in town, that they might be qualified by authentic information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others desirous of his interest to accommodate disputes, or of his advice in the settlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

The civilities which he had received were soon to be returned ; and I passed some time with great satisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the seats, gardens, and plantations which are scattered over it. My pleasure would indeed have been greater had I been sometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderness alone ; but to appear as the friend of Eugenio was an honour not to be enjoyed without some inconveniences ; so much was every one solicitous for my regard, that I could seldom escape to solitude, or steal a moment from the emulation of complaisance and the vigilance of officiousness.

In these rambles of good neighbourhood we frequently passed by a house of unusual magnificence. When I had my curiosity yet distracted among many novelties, it did not much attract my observation ; but in a short time I could not forbear surveying it with particular notice ; for the length of the wall which enclosed the gardens, the disposition of the shades that waved over it, and the canals of which I could obtain some glimpses through the trees from our own windows, gave me reason to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet seen in that province. I therefore inquired, as we rode by it, why we never, among our excursions, spent an hour where there was such an appearance of splendour and affluence ? Eugenio told me that the seat which I so much admired was commonly called in the country the *haunted house*, and that no visits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet seen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected, and desolate, I easily conceived that there was something to be explained, and told him that I supposed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by daylight without danger. The danger, says he, is indeed only that of appearing to solicit the acquaintance of a man with whom it is not possible to converse

without infamy, and who has driven from him, by his insolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.

Our conversation was then accidentally interrupted, but my inquisitive humour being now in motion, could not rest without a full account of this newly-discovered prodigy. I was soon informed that the fine house and spacious gardens were haunted by Squire Bluster, of whom it was very easy to learn the character, since nobody had regard for him sufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could discover.

Squire Bluster is descended of an ancient family. The estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed was much augmented by Captain Bluster, who served under Drake in the reign of Elizabeth; and the Blusters, who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently represented the shire in Parliament, been chosen to present addresses, and given laws at hunting-matches and races. They were eminently hospitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of an election. His lady went to the grave soon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not suffer him to be controlled, because she could not bear to hear him cry; and never sent him to school, because she was not able to live without his company. She taught him, however, very early to inspect the steward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the servants at a junket; so that he was, at the age of eighteen, a complete master of all the lower arts of domestic policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the ostler, and procured the discharge of nineteen maids for illicit correspondence with cottagers and char-women.

By the opportunities of parsimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians

had diligently improved, a very large sum of money was accumulated, and he found himself, when he took his affairs into his own hands, the richest man in the county. It has been long the custom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-first year by an entertainment, at which the house is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general festivity. On this occasion young Bluster exhibited the first tokens of his future eminence, by shaking his purse at an old gentleman who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater sum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has at one time or other insulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and spiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentless prosecution of every man that presumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no estate adjoining equal to his own, his oppressions are often borne without resistance for fear of a long suit, of which he delights to count the expenses without the least solicitude about the event; for he knows that, where nothing but an honorary right is contested, the poorer antagonist must always suffer, whatever shall be the last decision of the law.

By the success of some of these disputes he has so elated his insolence, and by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him so irritated his virulence, that his whole life is spent in meditating or executing mischief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand satisfaction for damages which his grounds have suffered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yesterday soliciting Eugenio to enable her to replevin her only cow, then in the pound by Squire Bluster's order,

who had sent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and persuade her to sell the cow at an under rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage for gathering blackberries in a hedge for his children, and has now an old woman in the county jail for a trespass which she committed, by coming into his ground to pick up acorns for her hog.

Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Distress will fly to immediate refuge without much consideration of remote consequences. Bluster has, therefore, a despotic authority in many families whom he has assisted on pressing occasions with larger sums than they can easily repay. The only visits that he makes are to these houses of misfortune, where he enters with the insolence of absolute command, enjoys the terrors of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and, in the height of his joy, insults the father with menaces and the daughters with obscenity.

He is, of late, somewhat less offensive ; for one of his debtors, after gentle expostulations, by which he was only irritated to grosser outrage, seized him by the sleeve, led him trembling into the courtyard, and closed the door upon him in a stormy night. He took his usual revenge next morning by a writ ; but the debt was discharged by the assistance of Eugenio.

It is his rule to suffer his tenants to owe him rent, because by this indulgence he secures to himself the power of seizure whenever he has an inclination to amuse himself with calamity, and feast his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet, as he is sometimes capriciously liberal to those whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and let his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied ; and, when one is ruined by oppression, the possibility of better fortune quickly lures another to supply his place.

Such is the life of Squire Bluster ; a man in whose power fortune has liberally placed the means of happiness, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers ; he is magnificent without witnesses ; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours scorn him as a brute, his dependants dread him as an oppressor, and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting that, if he is hated, he is likewise feared.

DISPOSITION OF MANKIND TO DISPARAGE MERIT.

“ The bow of Daphnis and the shafts you broke ;
When the fair boy received the gift of right ;
And, but for mischief, you had died of spite.”

VIRE.—DRYDEN’s *Thren.*

It is impossible to mingle in conversation without observing the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The first appearance of excellence unites multitudes against it ; unexpected opposition rises upon every side ; the celebrated and the obscure join in the confederacy ; subtlety furnishes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The strength and unanimity of this alliance is not easily conceived. It might be expected that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed with malice but by injuries ; that none should busy himself in contesting the pretensions of another but when some right of his own was involved in the question ; that at least hostilities commenced without cause should quickly cease ; that the armies of malignity should soon disperse when no com-

mon interest could be found to hold them and that the attack upon a rising character be left to those who had something to gain from the event.

The hazards of those that aspire to greatness would be much diminished if they had acknowledged rivals to encounter. There would then be few, and, what is of yet more importance, would be known. But who is sufficient to ward off the blows of invadants, or what force can stand against continual attacks and a continual succession of enemies? Yet, such is the state of the world, that can any man emerge from the crowd of eyes of the public upon him, than he will mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and be received in the tumult of hostility, from nameless hands, wounds not always to be cured.

It is probable that the onset again dates for renown is originally incited by men who imagine themselves in danger of success; but, when war is once declared, the soldiers flock to the standard, multitude camp only for want of employment, and squadrons are dispersed to every part with an opportunity of mischief that they have no prospect of praise, and pillage without profit.

When any man has endeavoured to attain distinction, he will be surprised to hear that he will be surprised to hear that he could not expect to be named; he will find the utmost acrimony among those whom he could not offend.

As there are to be found in the service of every diversity of temper and understanding, calumny is diffused by methods of propagation. Nothing is

too refined, too cruel or too trifling to be practised ; very little regard is had to the rules of honourable hostility, but every weapon is accounted lawful, and those that cannot make a thrust at life are content to keep themselves in play with petty malevolence, to tease with feeble blows and impotent disturbance.

But, as the industry of observation has divided the most miscellaneous and confused assemblages into proper classes, and ranged the insects of the summer, that torment us with their drones or stings, by their several tribes, the persecutors of merit, notwithstanding their numbers, may be likewise commodiously distinguished into Roarers, Whisperers, and Moderators.

The Roarer is an enemy rather terrible than dangerous. He has no other qualification for a champion of controversy than a hardened front and a strong voice. Having seldom so much desire to confute as to silence, he depends rather upon vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjust one part of his accusation to another, to preserve decency in his language, or probability in his narrative. He has always a store of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations, ready to be produced as occasion may require, which, by constant use, he pours out with resistless volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned, he without hesitation devotes him to bankruptcy ; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with rustic deformity ; if a new performance of genius happens to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeless idiot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the understanding by which it must be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon those whom he compels to hear them ; and though it will sometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, and the credulous mistake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he

endeavours to suppress soon recover their former strength, as the trees that bend to the tempest erect themselves again when its force is past.

The Whisperer is more dangerous. He easily gains attention by a soft address, and excites curiosity by an air of importance. As secrets are not to be made cheap by promiscuous publication, he calls a select audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of trust by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell that, though he seems to manage an extensive commerce, and talks in high terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately suffered much by an expensive project, and had a greater share than is acknowledged in the rich ship that perished by the storm. Of the beauty he has little to say, but that they who see her in a morning do not discover all those graces which are admired in the park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty that, though the excellence of the work be incontestable, he can claim but a small part of the reputation; that he owed most of the images and sentiments to a secret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the style was produced by the successive correction of the chief critics of the age.

As every one is pleased with imagining that he knows something not yet commonly divulged, secret history easily gains credit; but it is for the most part believed only while it circulates in whispers; and, when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The most pernicious enemy is the man of moderation. Without interest in the question, or any motive but honest curiosity, this impartial and zealous inquirer after truth is ready to hear either side, and always disposed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He has heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation; and, after a dili-

ent comparison of the evidence, concludes it probable that the splendid superstructure of business, being originally built upon a narrow basis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great distance; many merchants have supported themselves by expedients for a time without any final injury to their creditors; and what is lost by one adventure may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady, pleased with admiration, and desirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements; but surely most of her beauties must be genuine; and who can say that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps does not sparkle with the fire of Homer, but who has the judgment to discover his own deficiencies, and to supply them by the help of others; and, in his opinion, modesty is a quality so amiable and rare that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may justly be preferred by the public suffrage to petulant wit and ostentatious literature.

He who thus discovers failings with unwillingness, and extenuates faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication: his hearers repose upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuse.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peevish, and the thoughtless obstruct that worth which they cannot equal; and by artifices thus easy, sordid, and detestable, is industry defeated, beauty blasted, and genius depressed.

EXCESSIVE PARENTAL SEVERITY REPROVED.

" Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's farthest plains ;
My crime that I, a loyal wife,
In kind compassion spared my husband's life."

HOR.—FRANCIS's *Trans.*

POLITICIANS remark, that no oppression is so heavy or lasting as that which is inflicted by the perversion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be seized and the invader repelled whenever they are found ; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated and wisdom confounded ; resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

Equally dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families under the venerable sanction of parental authority ; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason ; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man ; and which, therefore, may wanton in cruelty without control, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications by which insolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the Romans that no son could be the murderer of his father,

and they had therefore no punishment appropriated to parricide. They seem likewise to have believed, with equal confidence, that no father could be cruel to his child ; and, therefore, they allowed every man the supreme judicature in his own house, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees that they had determined too hastily in favour of human nature ; they found that instinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice and malice ; that the nearest relation might be violated ; and that power, to whomsoever intrusted, might be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to supply and to change their institutions ; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital punishments from the parent to the magistrate.

There are, indeed, many houses which it is impossible to enter familiarly without discovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion ; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonstrances but from his own conscience, will seldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying justice by his own will.

If in any situation the heart were inaccessible to malignity, it might be supposed to be sufficiently secured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occasion of its existence, produces an obligation to make that existence happy. To see helpless infancy stretching out her hands and pouring out her cries in testimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealousy or any guilt to alienate affection, must surely awaken tenderness in every human mind ; and tenderness once excited will be hourly increased by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercussion of communicated pleasure, by the consciousness of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can see the vilest animal courting

his regard and shrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in distress and flying to him in danger, without more kindness than he can persuade himself to feel for the wild and unsocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourselves those to whom we impart any kind of pleasure, because we imagine their affection and esteem secured to us by the benefits which they receive.

There is, indeed, another method by which the pride of superiority may be likewise gratified. He that has extinguished all the sensations of humanity, and has no longer any satisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the distributor of happiness, may please himself with exciting terror as the inflicter of pain: he may delight his solitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands; in imagining the desires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the discontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it; he may amuse himself with new contrivances of detection, multiplicities of prohibition, and varieties of punishment; and swell with exultation when he considers how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us; and since, as Aristotle observes, *the government of a family is naturally monarchical*, it is, like other monarchies, too often arbitrarily administrated. The regal and parental tyrants differ only in the extent of their dominions and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince, however despotic, has so far shaken off all awe of the public eye as to venture upon those freaks of injustice which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward, not by

merit, but by fancy, and punishments regulated, not by the degree of the offence, but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the misery of others no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel? The king may be instigated by one man to the destruction of another; he may sometimes think himself endangered by the virtues of a subject; he may dread the successful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiscations; and his guilt may whisper that he can only be secure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppression of those who were born to his protection, of those who can disturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no spoils? Why cowards are cruel may be easily discovered; but for what reason, not more infamous than cowardice, can that man delight in oppression who has nothing to fear?

The unjustifiable severity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that those whom he injures are always in his sight. The injustice of a prince is often exercised upon those of whom he never had any personal or particular knowledge; and the sentence which he pronounces, whether of banishment, imprisonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domestic oppressor dooms himself to gaze upon those faces which he clouds with terror and with sorrow, and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to those who surround him, and can walk with satisfaction in the gloom of his own presence; he that can see submissive misery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy or demands justice, will scarcely be amended by remonstrance or admonition; he has found means

of stopping the avenues of tenderness, and arming his heart against the force of reason.

Even though no consideration should be paid to the great law of social beings, by which every individual is commanded to consult the happiness of others, yet the harsh parent is less to be vindicated than any other criminal, because he less provides for the happiness of himself. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he shall sink back to imbecility, and must depend for ease and cheerfulness upon the officiousness of others. But how has he obviated the inconvenience of old age, who alienates from him the assistance of his children, and whose bed must be surrounded in his last hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and of pain, by strangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is desirable?

Piety will indeed, in good minds, overcome provocation, and those who have been harassed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have suffered so far as to perform the last duties with alacrity and zeal. But surely no resentment can be equally painful with kindness thus undeserved, nor can severer punishment be imprecated upon a man not wholly lost in meanness and stupidity, than through the tediousness of decrepitude; to be reproached by the kindness of his own children; to receive not the tribute, but the alms of attendance; and to owe every relief of his miseries, not to gratitude, but to mercy.

USES OF ADVERSITY.

“Thou chiefest good !
Bestowed by Heaven, but seldom understood.”
LUCAN.—Rowe’s *Trans.*

As daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life ; that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude nor escaped by flight ; neither awed by greatness nor eluded by obscurity ; philosophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by persuading us that most of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverseness, and that nature has annexed to every vicissitude of external circumstances some advantage sufficient to overbalance all its inconveniences.

This attempt may, perhaps, be justly suspected of resemblance to the practice of physicians, who, when they cannot mitigate pain, destroy sensibility, and endeavour to conceal by opiates the ineffectiveness of their other medicines. The panegyrists of calamity have more frequently gained applause to their wit than acquiescence to their arguments ; nor has it appeared that the most musical oratory or subtle ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguish of oppression, the tediousness of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet it may be generally remarked, that where much has been attempted, something has been performed ; though the discoveries or acquisitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are at least sufficient to animate his industry. The antidotes with which phi-

losophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it salubrity and sweetness, have at least allayed its bitterness and contempered its malignity; the balm which she drops upon the wounds of the mind abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

By suffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we secure ourselves from vain and immoderate disquiet; we preserve for better purposes that strength which would be unprofitably wasted in wild efforts of desperation, and maintain that circumspection which may enable us to seize every support and improve every alleviation. This calmness will be more easily obtained as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmixed, unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

Seneca has attempted not only to pacify us in misfortune, but almost to allure us to it, by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. "He that never was acquainted with adversity," says he, "has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature." He invites his pupil to calamity as the Sirens allured the passenger to their coasts, by promising that he shall return with increase of knowledge, with enlarged views, and multiplied ideas.

Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last, and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject, is always eager for new inquiries; and, in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with variety by more rapid flights and bolder excursions: nor perhaps can there be proposed to those who have been accustomed to the pleasures of thought, a more pow-

erful incitement to any undertaking than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reason.

When Jason, in Valerius Flaccus, would incline the young prince Acastus to accompany him in the first essay of navigation, he disperses his apprehensions of danger by representations of the new tracts of earth and heaven which the expedition would spread before his eyes; and tells him with what grief he would hear, at their return, of the countries which they shall have seen, and the toils which they have surmounted.

“ Led by our stars, what tracks immense we trace !
From seas remote, what funds of science raise !
A pain to thought ! But when th’ heroic band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domestic you will then deplore,
And sigh while I describe the various shore.”

Acastus was soon prevailed upon by his curiosity to set rocks and hardships at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the same motives have in all ages had the same effect upon those whom the desire of fame or wisdom has distinguished from the common mass of mankind.

If, therefore, it can be proved that distress is necessary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy situation hides from us so large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the sight of affluence and splendour will be much diminished; for such is the delight of mental superiority, that none on whom nature or study have conferred it would purchase the gifts of fortune by its loss.

It is certain that, however the rhetoric of Seneca may have dressed adversity with extrinsic ornaments, he has justly represented it as affording some opportunities of observation which cannot be found in continual success; he has truly asserted,

that to escape misfortune is to want instruction, and that to live at ease is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happiness without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is necessary to a just sense of better fortune; for the good of our present state is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be sufficient to disturb and harass him, if he does not know how much he escapes. The lustre of diamonds is invigorated by the interposition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the shades. The highest pleasure which nature has indulged to sensitive perception is that of rest after fatigue; yet that state which labour heightens into delight is of itself only ease, and is incapable of satisfying the mind without the superaddition of diversified amusements.

Prosperity, as is truly asserted by Seneca, very much obstructs the knowledge of ourselves. No man can form a just estimate of his own powers by unactive speculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has surmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been attacked by no temptations, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which, therefore, the true value cannot be assigned.

"He that traverses the lists without an adversary, may receive," says the philosopher, "the reward of victory, but he has no pretensions to the honour." If it be the highest happiness of man to contemplate himself with satisfaction and to receive the gratulations of his own conscience, he whose courage has made way amid the turbulence of opposition, and whose vigour has broken through the snares of distress, has many advantages over those that have slept in the shades of indolence, and whose retrospect of time can entertain them with nothing but day rising upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally necessary is some variety of fortune to a nearer inspection of the manners, principles, and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their subjects, find it necessary to steal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is shown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reasonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm suspicion or excite resentment is carefully suppressed, and nothing appears but uniformity of sentiments and ardour of affection. It may be observed, that the universal complaisance which the ladies have the right of exacting keeps them generally unskilled in human nature; prosperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore must be always in danger of the same ignorance. Truth is scarcely to be heard but by those from whom it can serve no interest to conceal it.

FOLLY OF DELAYING AMENDMENT.

“Our barren years are past;
Be this of life the first, of sleth the last.”
STAT.—ELPHINSTON’s *Trans.*

No weakness of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadversion than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the easiness with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It seems generally believed, that as the eye can-

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not see itself, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own state, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters ; an opinion which, like innumerable other postulates, an inquirer finds himself inclined to admit upon very little evidence, because it affords a ready solution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greatest abilities frequently fail to promote the happiness of those who possess them ; why those who can distinguish with the utmost nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, suffer them to be confounded in their own conduct ; why the active and vigilant resign their affairs implicitly to the management of others ; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches towards ruin, without one sigh of solicitude or struggle for escape.

When a position teems thus with commodious consequences, who can, without regret, confess it to be false ? Yet it is certain that declaimers have indulged a disposition to describe the dominion of the passions as extended beyond the limits that nature assigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind : it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others, and disposes us to resent censures, lest we should confess them to be just. We are secretly conscious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the public eye, and please ourselves with innumerable impostures, by which, in reality, nobody is deceived.

In proof of the dimness of our internal sight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the success of the most absurd and incredible flattery, and the resentment always raised by advice, however soft, benevolent, and reasonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance,

but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it consoles our wants than displays our possessions. He that shall solicit the favour of his patron by praising him for qualities which he can find in himself, will be defeated by the more daring panegyrist who enriches him with adscititious excellency. Just praise is only a debt, but flattery is a present. The acknowledgment of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of those which we only feign, or desire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confession of sovereignty over regions never conquered, as a favourable decision of disputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice is offensive, not because it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which has escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as to ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes that superiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without inquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they would readily listen to information that recalls them from their errors, and catch the first alarm by which destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right; they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it; therefore few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is

gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expense, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason is not invigorated nor his appetite weakened.

The mischief of flattery is, not that it persuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it suppresses the influence of honest ambition, by raising an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice arises commonly, not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the discovery which it affords of the public suffrages. He that could withstand conscience is frightened at infamy, and shame prevails when reason was defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perspicacity cannot discover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or dissipated by levity, sheltered by hypocrisy or blasted by disgrace, who does not intend some time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleasure and interest, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itself by habit; and the change of manners, though sincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when some craving passion shall be fully gratified, or some powerful allurement cease its importunity.

Thus procrastination is accumulated on procrastination, and one impediment succeeds another, till age shatters our resolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of salutary purposes after they have long delighted

the imagination, and appeased that disquiet which every mind feels from known misconduct, when the attention is not diverted by business or by pleasure.

Nothing surely can be more unworthy of a reasonable nature than to continue in a state so opposite to real happiness, as that all the peace of solitude and felicity of meditation must arise from resolutions of forsaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men who pass months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit or betrayed by passion into practices which they closed and opened their eyes with purposes to avoid; purposes which, though settled on conviction, the first impulse of momentary desire totally overthrows.

The influence of custom is indeed such, that to conquer it will require the utmost efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any men more worthy of veneration and renown than those who have burst the shackles of habitual vice. This victory, however, has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroic as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of solicitation more frequent. He that, from experience of the folly of ambition, resigns his offices, may set himself free at once from temptation to squander his life in courts, because he cannot regain his former station. He who is enslaved by an amorous passion may quit his tyrant in disgust, and absence will, without the help of reason, overcome by degrees the desire of returning. But those appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory measures or gradual advances, are more tenaciously adhesive; the wish is so near the enjoyment that compliance often precedes consideration; and, before the powers of reason can be summoned, the time for employing them is past.

Indolence is, therefore, one of the vices from
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which those whom it once infects are seldom reformed. Every other species of luxury operates upon some appetite that is quickly satiated, and requires some concurrence of art or accident which every place will not supply; but the desire of ease acts equally at all hours, and, the longer it is indulged, is the more increased. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapse to indolence is soft and imperceptible, because it is only a mere cessation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, because it implies a change from rest to motion, from privation to reality.

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulges it is conscious: we all know our own state if we could be induced to consider it; and it might, perhaps, be useful to the conquest of all these ensnarers of the mind, if, at certain stated days, life was reviewed. Many things necessary are omitted, because we vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will for ever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unsettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can scarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorse. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himself a desire to distinguish every stage of his existence by some improvement, and delight himself with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new series of virtue and felicity.

ON BASHFULNESS.

"The power of words and soothing sounds appease
The raging pain and lessen the disease."

HOR.—FRANCIS'S *Trans.*

THE imbecility with which Verecundulus complains that the presence of a numerous assembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the studious part of mankind, whose education necessarily secludes them in their earlier years from mingled converse, till, at their dismission from schools and academies, they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and, coming forth from the gloom of solitude, are overpowered by the blaze of public life.

It is, perhaps, kindly provided by nature, that, as the feathers and strength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not completed till she is able to fly, so some proportion should be preserved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore restrained by shame, and we remain shackled by timidity till we have learned to speak and act with propriety.

I believe few can review the days of their youth without recollecting temptations which shame, rather than virtue, enabled them to resist; and opinions which, however erroneous in their principles and dangerous in their consequences, they have panted to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themselves irresistibly depressed by a languid anxiety which seized them at the moment of utterance, and still gathered strength from their endeavours to resist it.

It generally happens that assurance keeps an even pace with ability; and the fear of miscarriage, which hinders our first attempts, is gradually dissipated as

our skill advances towards certainty of success. That bashfulness, therefore, which prevents disgrace, that short and temporary shame which secures us from the danger of lasting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

Bashfulness, however it may incommoder for a moment, scarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may flush the cheek, flutter in the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its mischiefs soon pass off without remembrance. It may sometimes exclude pleasure, but seldom opens any avenue to sorrow or remorse. It is observed somewhere that *few have repented of having forbore to speak.*

To excite opposition and inflame malevolence is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by consciousness of strength. No man finds in himself any inclination to attack or oppose him who confesses his superiority by blushing in his presence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulness receive applause from every voice and support from every hand. Diffidence may check resolution and obstruct performance, but compensates embarrassments by more important advantages: it conciliates the proud and softens the severe, averts envy from excellence and censure from miscarriage.

It may indeed happen, that knowledge and virtue remain too long congealed by this frigorific power, as the principles of vegetation are sometimes obstructed by lingering frosts. He that enters late into a public station, though with all the abilities requisite to the discharge of his duty, will find his powers at first impeded by a timidity which he himself knows to be vicious, and must struggle long against dejection and reluctance before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulness of ease to the dignity of merit.

For this disease of the mind I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To

advise a man unaccustomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation ; to tell him whose life was passed in the shades of contemplation that he must not be disconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments of a splendid assembly, is to advise an inhabitant of Brazil or Sumatra not to shiver at an English winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look upon a precipice without emotion. It is to suppose custom instantaneously controllable by reason, and to endeavour to communicate by precept that which only time and habit can bestow.

He that hopes by philosophy and contemplation alone to fortify himself against that awe which all, at their first appearance on the stage of life, must feel from the spectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his resolution ; and I doubt whether the preservatives which Plato relates Alcibiades to have received from Socrates when he was about to speak in public, proved sufficient to secure him from the powerful fascination.

Yet, as the effects of time may, by art and industry, be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to consider how this troublesome instinct may be opposed when it exceeds its just proportion, and, instead of repressing petulance and temerity, silences eloquence and debilitates force ; since, though it cannot be hoped that anxiety should be immediately dissipated, it may be at least somewhat abated ; and the passions will operate with less violence when Reason rises against them, than while she either slumbers in neutrality, or, mistaking her interest, lends them her assistance.

No cause more frequently produces bashfulness than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an assembly filled with his merit, panting with expectation and hushed with attention, easily terrifies himself with the dread of disappointing them, and strains his imagination in pursuit of

something that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and show that his reputation was not gained by chance. He considers that what he shall say or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy is suspended upon every syllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the test of time. Under such solicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed, and, by struggling with attempts above her strength, quickly sinks into languishment and despondency!

The most useful medicines are often unpleasing to the taste. Those who are oppressed by their own reputation, will, perhaps, not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unnecessary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the rest of the world. He that considers how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himself. While we see multitudes passing before us, of whom, perhaps, not one appears to deserve our notice or excite our sympathy, we should remember that we likewise are lost in the same throng; that the eye which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us; and that the utmost which we can reasonably hope or fear is, to fill a vacant hour with prattle and be forgotten.

HUMAN CONGRUITIES AND ANTIPATHIES

“Beasts of each kind their fellows spare;
Bear lives in amity with bear.”—JUVENAL.

“The world,” says Locke, “has people of all sorts.” As in the general hurry produced by the superfluities of some and necessities of others, no

eds to stand still for want of employment, he innumerable gradations of ability, and varieties of study and inclination, no em-
it can be vacant for want of a man qualified
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inconvenience arises, in like manner, from
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if every man would be content with such as he is qualified to please. But if vanity tempts him to forsake his rank, and post himself among those with whom no common interest or mutual pleasure can ever unite him, he must always live in a state of unsocial separation, without tenderness and without trust.

There are many natures which can never approach within a certain distance, and which, when any irregular motive impels them towards contact, seem to start back from each other by some invincible repulsion. There are others which immediately cohere whenever they come into the reach of mutual attraction, and, with very little formality of preparation, mingle intimately as soon as they meet. Every man, whom either business or curiosity has thrown at large into the world, will recollect many instances of fondness and dislike which have forced themselves upon him without the intervention of his judgment; of dispositions to court some and avoid others, when he could assign no reason for the preference, or none adequate to the violence of his passions; of influence that acted instantaneously upon his mind, and which no arguments or persuasions could ever overcome.

Among those with whom time and intercourse have made us familiar, we feel our affections divided in different proportions without much regard to moral or intellectual merit. Every man knows some whom he cannot induce himself to trust, though he has no reason to suspect that they would betray him; those to whom he cannot complain, though he never observed them to want compassion; those in whose presence he never can be gay, though excited by invitations to mirth and freedom; and those from whom he cannot be content to receive instruction, though they never insulted his ignorance by contempt or ostentation.

That much regard is to be had to those instincts

of kindness and dislike, or that reason should blindly follow them, I am far from intending to inculcate: it is very certain that, by indulgence, we may give them strength which they have not by nature; and almost every example of ingratitude and treachery proves that, by obeying them, we may commit our happiness to those who are very unworthy of so great a trust. But it may be deserved to be remarked, that, since few contend much with their inclinations, it is generally vain to solicit the good-will of those whom we perceive thus involuntarily alienated from us; neither knowledge nor virtue will reconcile antipathy; and, though officiousness may for a time be admitted, and diligence applauded, they will at last be dismissed with coldness or discouraged by neglect.

Some have, indeed, an occult power of stealing upon the affections, of exciting universal benevolence, and disposing every heart to fondness and friendship. But this is a felicity granted only to the favourite of nature. The greater part of mankind find a different reception from different dispositions; they sometimes obtain unexpected caresses from those whom they never flattered with uncommon regard, and sometimes exhaust all their arts of pleasing without effect. To these it is necessary to look round, and attempt every breast in which they find virtue sufficient for the foundation of friendship; to enter into the crowd, and try whom chance will offer to their notice, till they fix on some temper congenial to their own, as the magnet, rolled in the dust, collects the fragments of its kindred metal from a thousand particles of other substances.

Every man must have remarked the facility with which the kindness of others is sometimes gained by those to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are, by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided almost into different spe-

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cies, which regard one another, for the most part, with scorn and malignity. Each of these classes of the human race has desires, fears, and conversation, vexations and merriment, peculiar to itself; cares which another cannot feel; pleasures which he cannot partake; and modes of expressing every sensation which he cannot understand. That frolic which shakes one man with laughter will convulse another with indignation; the strain of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence.

To raise esteem we must benefit others; to procure love we must please them. Aristotle observes, that old men do not readily form friendships, because they are not easily susceptible of pleasure. He that can contribute to the hilarity of the vacant hour, or partake with equal gust the favourite amusement; he whose mind is employed on the same objects, and who, therefore, never harasses the understanding with unaccustomed ideas, will be welcomed with ardour and left with regret, unless he destroys those recommendations by faults with which peace and security cannot consist.

It were happy if, in forming friendships, virtue could concur with pleasure; but the greatest part of human gratifications approach so nearly to vice, that few who make the delight of others their rule of conduct can avoid disingenuous compliances; yet certainly he that suffers himself to be driven or allured from virtue, mistakes his own interest, since he gains succour by means for which his friend, if ever he becomes wise, must scorn him, and for which, at last, he must scorn himself.

IMITATION OF OTHERS.

"Gaurus pretends to Cato's fame;
And proves, by Cato's vice, his claim."

MARTIAL.

DISTINCTION is so pleasing to the pride of man, a great part of the pain and pleasure of life arises from the gratification or disappointment of incessant wish for superiority, from the success or miscarriage of secret competitions, from victories or defeats, of which, though they appear to us of little importance, in reality none are conscious except ourselves.

Proportionate to the prevalence of this love of distinction is the variety of means by which its attainment is attempted. Every man, however hopeless his pretensions may appear to all but himself, has some project by which he hopes to rise to reputation; some art by which he imagines that the notice of the world will be attracted; some quality, good or bad, which discriminates him from the commonalty of mortals, and by which others may be perked to love or compelled to fear him. The steps of honour, however steep, never appear inaccessible; he that despairs to scale the precipices of which learning and valour have conducted their heroes, discovers some by-path or easier acclivity, which, though it cannot bring him to the summit, will yet enable him to overlook those with whom he is now contending for eminence; and we can require more to the happiness of the present hour than to surpass him that stands next before us.

As the greater part of human kind speak and act wholly by imitation, most of those who aspire to

honour and applause propose to themselves some example which serves as the model of their conduct and the limit of their hopes. Almost every man, if closely examined, will be found to have enlisted himself under some leader whom he expects to conduct him to renown; to have some hero or other, living or dead, in his view, whose character he endeavours to assume, and whose performances he labours to equal.

When the original is well chosen and judiciously copied, the imitator often arrives at excellence which he could never have attained without direction; for few are born with abilities to discover new possibilities of excellence, and to distinguish themselves by means never tried before.

But folly and idleness often contrive to gratify pride at a cheaper rate: not the qualities which are most illustrious, but those which are of easiest attainment, are selected for imitation; and the honours and rewards which public gratitude has paid to the benefactors of mankind, are expected by wretches who can only imitate them in their vices and defects, or adopt some petty singularities, of which those from whom they are borrowed were secretly ashamed.

No man rises to such a height as to become conspicuous, but he is on one side censured by undiscerning malice, which reproaches him for his best actions, and slanders his apparent and incontestable excellences; and idolized on the other by ignorant admiration, which exalts his faults and follies into virtues. It may be observed, that he by whose intimacy his acquaintances imagine themselves dignified, generally diffuses among them his mien and his habits; and, indeed, without more vigilance than is generally applied to the regulation of the minuter parts of behaviour, it is not easy, when we converse much with one whose general character excites our veneration, to escape all contagion of

his peculiarities, even when we do not deliberately think them worthy of our notice, and when they would have excited laughter or disgust, had they not been protected by their alliance to nobler qualities, and accidentally consorted with knowledge or with virtue.

The faults of a man loved or honoured sometimes steal secretly and imperceptibly upon the wise and virtuous, but by injudicious fondness or thoughtless vanity are adopted with design. There is scarce any failing of mind or body, any error of opinion or depravity of practice, which, instead of producing shame and discontent, its natural effects, has not at one time or other gladdened vanity with the hopes of praise, and been displayed with ostentatious industry by those who sought kindred minds among the wits or heroes, and could prove their relation only by similitude of deformity.

In consequence of this perverse ambition, every habit which reason condemns may be indulged and avowed. When a man is upbraided with his faults, he may indeed be pardoned if he endeavours to run for shelter to some celebrated name; but it is not to be suffered that, from the retreats to which he fled from infamy, he should issue again with the confidence of conquests, and call upon mankind for praise. Yet we see men that waste their patrimony in luxury, destroy their health with debauchery, and enervate their minds with idleness, because there have been some whom luxury never could sink into contempt, nor idleness hinder from the praise of genius.

This general inclination of mankind to copy characters in the gross, and the force which the recommendation of illustrious examples adds to the allurements of vice, ought to be considered by all whose character excludes them from the shades of secrecy, as incitements to scrupulous caution and universal purity of manners. No man, however

enslaved to his appetites or hurried by his passions, can, while he preserves his intellects unimpaired, please himself with promoting the corruption of others. He whose merit has enlarged his influence, would surely wish to exert it for the benefit of mankind. Yet such will be the effect of his reputation, while he suffers himself to indulge in any favourite fault, that they who have no hope to reach his excellence will catch at his failings, and his virtues will be cited to justify the copiers of his vices.

It is particularly the duty of those who consign illustrious names to posterity, to take care lest their readers be misled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be justly condemned as an enemy to goodness who suffers fondness or interest to confound right with wrong, or to shelter the faults which even the wisest and the best have committed from that ignominy which guilt ought always to suffer, and with which it should be more deeply stigmatized when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth, since we shall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence unless its turpitude be laid open, and the eye secured from the deception of surrounding splendour.

CHARACTER AS AFFECTED BY CIRCUMSTANCES.

"Priscus, you've often asked me how I'd live,
Should fate at once both wealth and honour give ;
What soul his future conduct can foresee ?
Tell me what sort of lion you would be."

MART.—F. LEWIS's *Trans.*

NOTHING has been longer observed, than that a change of fortune causes a change of manners ;

and that it is difficult to conjecture, from the conduct of him whom we see in a low condition, how he would act if wealth and power were put into his hands. But it is generally agreed that few men are made better by affluence or exaltation; and that the powers of the mind, when they are unbound and expanded by the sunshine of felicity, more frequently luxuriate into follies than blossom into goodness.

Many observations have concurred to establish this opinion, and it is not likely soon to become obsolete for want of new occasions to revive it. The greater part of mankind are corrupt in every condition, and differ in high and low stations only as they have more or fewer opportunities of gratifying their desires, or as they are more or less restrained by human censures. Many vitiate their principles in the acquisition of riches; and who can wonder that what is gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and excess?

Yet I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly not common, yet approaches not so nearly to universality as some have asserted in the bitterness of resentment or heat of declamation.

Whoever rises above those who once pleased themselves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain sooner than others that which all pursue with the same ardour, and to which all imagine themselves entitled, will for ever be a crime. When those who started with us in the race of life leave us so far behind that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our disappointment by remarks on the arts of supplantation by which they gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they possess it. Of them whose rise we could not hinder, we solace ourselves by prognosticating the fall.

It is impossible for human purity not to betray to

an eye thus sharpened by malignity some stains which lay concealed and unregarded while none thought it their interest to discover them ; nor can the most circumspect attention or steady rectitude escape blame from censors who have no inclination to approve. Riches therefore, perhaps, do not so often produce crimes as incite accusers.

The common charge against those who rise above their original condition is that of pride. It is certain that success naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendship, and a thousand causes which concur in every event without human contrivance or interposition, the part which they may justly claim in his advancement. We rate ourselves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But captiousness and jealousy are likewise easily offended, and to him who studiously looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will supply it ; freedom will be rudeness, and reserve sullenness ; mirth will be negligence, and seriousness formality ; when he is received with formality, distance and respect are inculcated ; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himself insulted by condescensions.

It must, however, be confessed that, as all sudden changes are dangerous, a quick transition from poverty to abundance can seldom be made with safety. He that has long lived within sight of pleasures which he could not reach, will need more than common moderation not to lose his reason in unbounded riot when they are first put into his power.

Every possession is endeared by novelty ; every gratification is exaggerated by desire. It is difficult not to estimate what is lately gained above its real value ; it is impossible not to annex greater happiness to that condition from which we are un-

willingly excluded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reason, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune may be generally distinguished from those who are enriched in the common course of lineal descent, by his greater haste to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dress, the pomp of his equipage, the splendour of his furniture, and the luxury of his table.

A thousand things which familiarity discovers to be of little value have power for a time to seize the imagination. A Virginian king, when the Europeans had fixed a lock on his door, was so delighted to find his subjects admitted or excluded with such facility, that it was from morning to evening his whole employment to turn the key. We, among whom locks and keys have been longer in use, are inclined to laugh at this Indian amusement; yet I doubt whether this paper will have a single reader that may not apply the story to himself, and recollect some hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the transitory charms of trifling novelty.

Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has suddenly transported into new regions, where unaccustomed lustre dazzles his eyes, and untasted delicacies solicit his appetite. Let him not be considered as lost in hopeless degeneracy, though he for a while forgets the regard due to others to indulge the contemplation of himself, and in the extravagance of his first raptures expects that his eye should regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as decisive and oraculous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madness of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the sense of his insufficiency will soon return; he will remember that the co-operation of others is necessary to his happiness, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at least, one consideration which ought to alleviate our censures of the powerful and rich. To imagine them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions is to be very little acquainted with the world.

“Thou hast not known the giddy whirls of fate,
Nor servile flatteries which enchant the great.”

He that can do much good or harm will not find many whom ambition or cowardice will suffer to be sincere. While we live upon the level with the rest of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends and reproaches of enemies; but men who stand in the highest ranks of society seldom hear of their faults; if by any accident an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears, flattery is always at hand to pour in their opiates, to quiet conviction, and obtund remorse.

Favour is seldom gained but by conformity in vice. Virtue can stand without assistance, and considers herself as very little obliged by countenance and approbation; but vice, spiritless and timidous, seeks the shelter of crowds and the support of confederacy. The sycophant, therefore, neglects the good qualities of his patron, and employs all his art on his weakness and follies, regales his reigning vanity, or stimulates his prevalent desires.

Virtue is sufficiently difficult with any circumstances, but the difficulty is increased when reproof and advice are frightened away. In common life, reason and conscience have only the appetites and passions to encounter; but in higher stations they must oppose artifice and adulation. He, therefore, that yields to such temptations cannot give those who look upon his miscarriage much reason for exultation, since few can justly presume that from the same snare they should have been able to escape.

EXTENT OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

"Good men are scarce, the just are thinly sown;
They thrive but ill, nor can they last when grown;
And should we count them, and our store compile,
Yet Thebes more gates could show, more mouths the Nile."
Juv.—CREECH's *Trans.*

NONE of the axioms of wisdom, which recommended the ancient sages to veneration, seems to have required less extent of knowledge or perspicacity of penetration than the remark of Bias, that *οἱ πλεονες κακοι, the majority are wicked.*

The depravity of mankind is so easily discoverable, that nothing but the desert or the cell can exclude it from notice. The knowledge of crimes intrudes uncalled and undesired. They whom their abstraction from common occurrences hinders from seeing iniquity, will quickly have their attention awakened by feeling it. Even he who ventures not into the world may learn its corruption in his closet. For what are treatises of morality but persuasives to the practice of duties, for which no arguments would be necessary, but that we are continually tempted to violate or neglect them? What are all the records of history but narratives of successive villanies, of treasons and usurpations, massacres and wars?

But perhaps the excellence of aphorisms consists not so much in the expression of some rare or abstruse sentiment as in the comprehension of some obvious and useful truth in a few words. We frequently fall into error and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because for a time they are not remembered; and be-

may therefore be justly numbered among the factors of mankind who contracts the great mass of life into short sentences, that may be easily expressed on the memory, and taught by frequent collection to recur habitually to the mind.

However those who have passed through the life of man may now wonder that any should desire to be cautioned against corruption, to find that they have themselves purchased the conviction by many disappointments and vexations which an earlier knowledge would have saved them; and may see on every side some leading themselves into perplexities, and some leading into ruin by ignorance or neglect of the moral Bias.

Every day sends out, in quest of pleasure and distinction, some heir fondled in ignorance and reared into pride. He comes forth with all the confidence of a spirit unacquainted with sin and all the benevolence of a mind not yet tried by opposition, alarmed by fraud, or imbittered by cruelty. He loves all, because he imagines himself the universal favourite. Every exclamation produces new acquaintance, and acquaintance kindles into friendship.

Every season brings a new flight of beauties into the world, who have hitherto heard only of their own charms, and imagine that the heart is delighted with the passion but that of love. They are seen surrounded by admirers whom they credit, because they give them only what is heard with delight. Every eye that gazes upon them is a lover, and whoever sighs for them is pining in despair.

He surely is a useful monitor who inculcates these thoughtless strangers that the *major* wicked; who informs them that the train of wealth and beauty draw after them is lured by the scent of prey; and that, perhaps, among those who crowd about them with professions

flatteries, there is not one who does not hope for some opportunity to devour or betray them, to glut himself by their destruction, or to share their spoils with a stronger savage.

Virtue, presented singly to the imagination or the reason, is so well recommended by its own graces, and so strongly supported by arguments, that a good man wonders how any can be bad; and they who are ignorant of the force of passion and interest, who never observed the arts of seduction, the contagion of example, the gradual descent from one crime to another, or the insensible depravation of the principles by loose conversation, naturally expect to find integrity in every bosom and veracity on every tongue.

It is, indeed, impossible not to hear from those who have lived longer, of wrongs and falsehoods, of violence and circumvention; but such narratives are commonly regarded by the young, the hardy, and the confident, as nothing more than the murmurs of peevishness or the dreams of dotage; and, notwithstanding all the documents of hoary wisdom, we commonly plunge into the world fearless and credulous, without any foresight of danger or apprehension of deceit.

I have remarked, in a former paper, that credulity is the common failing of unexperienced virtue; and that he who is spontaneously suspicious may be justly charged with radical corruption; for, if he has not known the prevalence of dishonesty by information, nor had time to observe it with his own eyes, whence can he take his measures of judgment but from himself?

They who best deserve to escape the snares of artifice are most likely to be entangled. He that endeavours to live for the good of others must always be exposed to the arts of those who live only for themselves, unless he is taught by timely precepts the caution required in common transac-

tions, and shown at a distance the pitfalls of treachery.

To youth, therefore, it should be carefully inculcated, that, to enter the road of life without caution or reserve, in expectation of general fidelity and justice, is to launch on the wide ocean without the instruments of steerage, and to hope that every wind will be prosperous, and that every coast will afford a harbour.

To enumerate the various motives to deceit and injury would be to count all the desires that prevail among the sons of men ; since there is no ambition, however petty, no wish, however absurd, that, by indulgence, will not be enabled to overpower the influence of virtue. Many there are who openly and almost professedly regulate all their conduct by their love of money ; who have no other reason for action or forbearance, for compliance or refusal, than that they hope to gain more by one than by the other. These are, indeed, the meanest and cruellest of human beings ; a race with whom, as with some pestiferous animals, the whole creation seems to be at war ; but who, however detested or scorned, long continue to add heap to heap, and, when they have reduced one to beggary, are still permitted to fasten on another.

Others, yet less rationally wicked, pass their lives in mischief, because they cannot bear the sight of success, and mark out every man for hatred whose fame or fortune they believe increasing.

Many who have not advanced to these degrees of guilt are yet wholly unqualified for friendship, and unable to maintain any constant or regular course of kindness. Happiness may be destroyed not only by union with the man who is apparently the slave of interest, but with him whom a wild opinion of the dignity of perseverance, in whatever cause, disposes to pursue every injury with unwea-

ried and perpetual resentment; with him whose vanity inclines him to consider every man as a rival in every pretension; with him whose airy negligence puts his friend's affairs or secrets in continual hazard, and who thinks his forgetfulness of others excused by his inattention to himself; and with him whose inconstancy ranges without any settled rule of choice through varieties of friendship, and who adopts and dismisses favourites by the sudden impulse of caprice.

Thus numerous are the dangers to which the converse of mankind exposes us, and which can be avoided only by prudent distrust. He, therefore, that, remembering this salutary maxim, learns early to withhold his fondness from fair appearances, will have reason to pay some honours to Bias of Priene, who enabled him to become wise without the cost of experience.

INCONSISTENCY OF HUMAN CONDUCT.

“To yield to remedies is half the cure.”

SENECA.

PYTHAGORAS is reported to have required from those whom he instructed in philosophy a probationary silence of five years. Whether this prohibition of speech extended to all the parts of his time, as seems generally to be supposed, or was to be observed only in the school or in the presence of their master, as is more probable, it was sufficient to discover the pupil's disposition; to try whether he was willing to pay the price of learning; or whether he was one of those whose ardour was rather violent than lasting, and who expected to

grow wise on other terms than those of patience and obedience.

Many of the blessings universally desired are very frequently wanted, because most men, when they should labour, content themselves to complain, and rather linger in a state in which they cannot be at rest, than improve their condition by vigour and resolution.

Providence has fixed the limits of human enjoyment by immovable boundaries, and has set different gratifications at such a distance from each other that no art or power can bring them together. This great law it is the business of every rational being to understand, that life may not pass away in an attempt to make contradictions consistent, to combine opposite qualities, and to unite things which the nature of their being must always keep asunder.

Of two objects tempting at a distance on contrary sides, it is impossible to approach one but by receding from the other; by long deliberation and dilatory projects they may both be lost, but can never be both gained. It is therefore necessary to compare them, and, when we have determined the preference, to withdraw our eyes and our thoughts at once from that which reason directs us to reject. This is more necessary if that which we are forsaking has the power of delighting the senses or firing the fancy. He that once turns aside to the allurements of unlawful pleasure can have no security that he shall ever regain the paths of virtue.

The philosophic goddess of Boethius, having related the story of Orpheus, who, when he had recovered his wife from the dominions of death, lost her again by looking back upon her in the confines of light, concludes with a very elegant and forcible application. *Whoever you are that endeavour to elevate your minds to the illuminations of Heaven, consider yourselves as represented in this fable: for he that is once so far overcome as to turn back his eyes towards*

the infernal caverns, loses at the first sight all that influence which attracted him on high.

It may be observed, in general, that the future is purchased by the present. It is not possible to secure distant or permanent happiness but by the forbearance of some immediate gratification. This is so evidently true with regard to the whole of our existence, that all the precepts of theology have no other tendency than to enforce a life of faith; a life not regulated by our senses, but our belief; a life in which pleasures are to be refused for fear of invisible punishments, and calamities sometimes to be sought, and always endured, in hope of rewards that shall be obtained in another state.

Even if we take into our view only that particle of our duration which is terminated by the grave, it will be found that we cannot enjoy one part of life beyond the common limitations of pleasure, but by anticipating some of the satisfaction which should exhilarate the following years. The heat of youth may spread happiness into wild luxuriance; but the radical vigour requisite to make it perennial is exhausted, and all that can be hoped afterward is languor and sterility.

The reigning error of mankind is, that we are no content with the conditions on which the goods of life are granted. No man is insensible of the value of knowledge, the advantages of health, or the convenience of plenty, but every day shows us those on whom the conviction is without effect.

Knowledge is praised and desired by multitudes whom her charms could never rouse from the couch of sloth; whom the faintest invitation of pleasure draws away from their studies; to whom any other method of wearing out the day is more eligible than the use of books, and who are more easily engaged by any conversation than such as may rectify their notions or enlarge their comprehension.

Every man that has felt pain knows how little
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all other comforts can gladden him to whom health is denied. Yet who is there does not sometimes hazard it for the enjoyment of an hour? All assemblies of jollity, all places of public entertainment, exhibit examples of strength wasted in riot and beauty withering in irregularity; nor is it easy to enter a house in which part of the family is not groaning in repentance of past intemperance, and part admitting disease by negligence, or soliciting it by luxury.

There is no pleasure which men of every age and sect have more generally agreed to mention with contempt than the gratifications of the palate; an entertainment so far removed from intellectual happiness that scarcely the most shameless of the sensual herd have dared to defend it; yet even to this, the lowest of our delights—to this, though neither quick nor lasting—is health, with all its activity and sprightliness, daily sacrificed; and for this are half the miseries endured which urge impatience to call on death.

The whole world is put in motion by the wish for riches and the dread of poverty. Who, then, would not imagine, that such conduct as will inevitably destroy what all are thus labouring to acquire, must generally be avoided? That he who spends more than he receives must in time become indigent, cannot be doubted; but, how evident soever this consequence may appear, the spendthrift moves in the whirl of pleasure with too much rapidity to keep it before his eyes, and, in the intoxication of gayety, grows every day poorer, without any such sense of approaching ruin as is sufficient to awake him into caution.

Many complaints are made of the misery of life; and, indeed, it must be confessed, that we are subject to calamities by which the good and bad, the diligent and slothful, the vigilant and heedless, are equally afflicted. But, surely, though some indul-

gence may be allowed to groans extorted by inevitable misery, no man has a right to repine at evils which, against warning, against experience, he deliberately and leisurely brings upon his own head; or to consider himself as debarred from happiness by such obstacles as resolution may break or dexterity may put aside.

Great numbers who quarrel with their condition have wanted, not the power, but the will to obtain a better state. They have never contemplated the difference between good and evil sufficiently to quicken aversion or invigorate desire; they have indulged a drowsy thoughtlessness or giddy levity; have committed the balance of choice to the management of caprice; and, when they have long accustomed themselves to receive all that chance offered them, without examination, lament at last that they find themselves deceived.

FOPPERY EXPOSES TO RIDICULE AND CONTEMPT.

“ Democritus would feed his spleen, and shake
His sides and shoulders till he felt them ache.”
JUV.—DRYDEN’S *Thras.*

“ Every man,” says Tully, “ has two characters; one which he partakes with all mankind, and by which he is distinguished from brute animals; another, which discriminates him from the rest of his own species, and impresses on him a manner and temper peculiar to himself: this particular character, if it be not repugnant to the laws of general humanity, it is always his business to cultivate and preserve.”

Every hour furnishes some confirmation of Tully's precept. It seldom happens that an assembly of pleasure is so happily selected but that some one finds admission with whom the rest are deservedly offended ; and it will appear, on a close inspection, that scarce any man becomes eminently disagreeable but by a departure from his real character, and an attempt at something for which nature or education have left him unqualified.

Ignorance or dulness have, indeed, no power of affording delight ; but they never give disgust except when they assume the dignity of knowledge or ape the sprightliness of wit. Awkwardness and inelegance have none of those attractions by which ease and politeness take possession of the heart ; but ridicule and censure seldom rise against them, unless they appear associated with that confidence which belongs only to long acquaintance with the modes of life, and to consciousness of unfailing propriety of behaviour. Deformity itself is regarded with tenderness rather than aversion when it does not attempt to deceive the sight by dress and decoration, and to seize upon fictitious claims the prerogatives of beauty.

He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city, will see many passengers whose air and motion it will be difficult to beheld without contempt and laughter ; but if he examines what are the appearances that thus powerfully excite his risibility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful defect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of soppiness, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the solemnity of grandeur ; by the sprightly trip, the stately stalk, the formal strut, and the lofty mien ; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks elaborately formed as evidences of importance.

It has, I think, been sometimes urged in favour

of affectation, that it is only a mistake of the means to a good end, and that the intention with which it is practised is always to please. If all attempts to innovate the constitutional or habitual character have really proceeded from public spirit and love of others, the world has hitherto been sufficiently ungrateful, since no return but scorn has yet been made to the most difficult of all enterprises, a contest with nature; nor has any pity been shown to the fatigues of labour which never succeeded, and the uneasiness of disguise by which nothing was concealed.

It seems, therefore, to be determined, by the general suffrage of mankind, that he who decks himself in adscititious qualities rather purposes to command applause than impart pleasure; and he is therefore treated as a man, who, by an unreasonable ambition, usurps the place in society to which he has no right. Praise is seldom paid with willingness even to incontestable merit, and it can be no wonder that he who calls for it without desert is repulsed with universal indignation.

Affectation naturally counterfeits those excellencies which are placed at the greatest distance from possibility of attainment. We are conscious of our own defects, and eagerly endeavour to supply them by artificial excellence; nor would such efforts be wholly without excuse, were they not often excited by ornamental trifles, which he, that thus anxiously struggles for the reputation of possessing them, would not have been known to want, had not his industry quickened observation.

Gelasimus passed the first part of his life in academical privacy and rural retirement, without any other conversation than that of scholars, grave, studious, and abstracted as himself. He cultivated the mathematical sciences with indefatigable diligence, discovered many useful theorems, discussed with great accuracy the resistance of fluids, and

though his priority was not generally acknowledged, was the first who fully explained all the properties of the catenarian* curve.

Learning, when it rises to eminence, will be observed in time, whatever mists may happen to surround it. Gelasimus, in his forty-ninth year, was distinguished by those who have the rewards of knowledge in their hands, and called out to display his acquisitions for the honour of his country, and add dignity by his presence to philosophical assemblies. As he did not suspect his unfitness for common affairs, he felt no reluctance to obey the invitation, and what he did not feel he had yet too much honesty to feign. He entered into the world at a larger and more populous college, where his performance would be more public and his renown farther extended; and imagined that he should find his reputation universally prevalent, and the influence of learning everywhere the same.

His merit introduced him to splendid tables and elegant acquaintance; but he did not find himself always qualified to join in the conversation. He was distressed by civilities which he knew not how to repay, and entangled in many ceremonial perplexities from which his books and diagrams could not extricate him. He was sometimes unluckily engaged in disputes with ladies with whom algebraic axioms had no great weight; and saw many whose favour and esteem he could not but desire, to whom he was very little recommended by his theories of the tides, or his approximations to the quadrature of the circle. Gelasimus did not want penetration to discover that no charm was more generally irresistible than that of easy facetiousness and flowing hilarity. He saw that diversion was more frequently welcome than improvement; that

* From *catena*, a chain, and signifying, in geometry, the peculiar curve formed by a chain or rope hanging freely from two points of suspension.

authority and seriousness were rather feared than loved ; and that the grave scholar was a kind of imperious ally, hastily dismissed when his assistance was no longer necessary. He came to a sudden resolution of throwing off those cumbrous ornaments of learning which hindered his reception, and commenced a man of wit and jocularity. Utterly unacquainted with every topic of merriment, ignorant of the modes and follies, the vices and virtues of mankind, and unfurnished with any ideas but such as Pappus and Archimedes had given him, he began to silence all inquiries with a jest instead of a solution ; extended his face with a grin, which he mistook for a smile ; and, in the place of a scientific discourse, retailed in a new language formed between the college and the tavern, the intelligence of the newspaper.

Laughter, he knew, was a token of alacrity ; and therefore, whatever he said or heard, he was careful not to fail in that great duty of a wit. If he asked or told the hour of the day, if he complained of heat or cold, stirred the fire, or filled a glass, removed his chair, or snuffed a candle, he always found some occasion to laugh. The jest was indeed a secret to all but himself, but habitual confidence in his own discernment hindered him from suspecting any weakness or mistake. He wondered that his wit was so little understood, but expected that his audience would comprehend it by degrees, and persisted all his life to show, by gross buffoonery, how little the strongest faculties can perform beyond the limits of their own province.

INTEREST AND ENVY THE DISTURBERS OF HUMAN HAPPINESS.

"No faith of partnership dominion owns ;
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones."

LUCAN.—*Rowe's Trans.*

THE hostility perpetually exercised between one man and another, is caused by the desire of many for that which only few can possess. Every man would be rich, powerful, and famous : yet fame, power, and riches are only the names of relative conditions, which imply the obscurity of dependance and poverty of greater numbers.

This universal and incessant competition produces injury and malice by two motives, interest and envy ; the prospect of adding to our possessions what we can take from others, and the hope of alleviating the sense of our disparity by lessening others, though we gain nothing to ourselves.

Of these two malignant and destructive powers, it seems probable, at the first view, that interest has the strongest and most extensive influence. It is easy to conceive, that opportunities to seize what has been long wanted may excite desires almost irresistible ; but surely the same eagerness cannot be kindled by an accidental power of destroying that which gives happiness to another. It must be more natural to rob for gain than to ravage only for mischief.

Yet I am inclined to believe that the great law of mutual benevolence is oftener violated by envy than by interest ; and that most of the misery which the defamation of blameless actions or the obstruction of honest endeavours brings upon the world, is inflicted by men that propose no advantage to themselves but the satisfaction of poisoning the bar-

quiet which they cannot taste, and blasting the harvest which they have no right to reap.

Interest can diffuse itself but to a narrow compass. The number is never large of those who can hope to fill the posts of degraded power, catch the fragments of shattered fortune, or succeed to the honours of depreciated beauty. But the empire of envy has no limits, as it requires to its influence very little help from external circumstances. Envy may always be produced by idleness and pride, and in what place will they not be found?

Interest requires some qualities not universally bestowed. The ruin of another will produce no profit to him who has not discernment to mark his advantage, courage to seize, and activity to pursue it; but the cold malignity of envy may be exerted in a torpid and quiescent state, amid the gloom of stupidity, in the coverts of cowardice. He that falls by the attacks of interest is torn by hungry tigers; he may discover and resist his enemies. He that perishes in the ambuses of envy is destroyed by unknown and invisible assailants, and dies like a man suffocated by a poisonous vapour, without knowledge of his danger or possibility of contest.

Interest is seldom pursued but at some hazard. He that hopes to gain much has commonly something to lose; and, when he ventures to attack superiority, if he fails to conquer, is irrevocably crushed. But envy may act without expense or danger. To spread suspicion, to invent calumnies, to propagate scandal, requires neither labour nor courage. It is easy for the author of a lie, however malignant, to escape detection, and infamy needs very little industry to assist its circulation.

Envy is almost the only vice which is practicable at all times and in every place: the only passion which can never lie quiet for want of irritation; its effects, therefore, are everywhere discoverable, and *its attempts always to be dreaded.*

It is impossible to mention a name which any advantageous distinction has made eminent, but some latent animosity will burst out. The wealthy trader, however he may abstract himself from public affairs, will never want those who hint, with Shylock, that ships are but boards. The beauty adorned only with the unambitious graces of innocence and modesty, provokes, whenever she appears, a thousand murmurs of detraction. The genius, even when he endeavours only to entertain or instruct, yet suffers persecution from innumerable critics, whose acrimony is excited merely by the pain of seeing others pleased, and of hearing applauses which another enjoys.

The frequency of envy makes it so familiar that it escapes our notice; nor do we often reflect upon its turpitude or malignity till we happen to feel its influence. When he that has given no provocation to malice but by attempting to excel, finds himself pursued by multitudes whom he never saw, with all the implacability of personal resentment; when he perceives clamour and malice let loose upon him as a public enemy, and incited by every stratagem of defamation; when he hears the misfortunes of his family or the follies of his youth exposed to the world, and every failure of conduct or defect of nature aggravated and ridiculed, he then learns to abhor those artifices at which he only laughed before, and discovers how much the happiness of life would be advanced by the eradication of envy from the human heart.

Envy is, indeed, a stubborn weed of the mind, and seldom yields to the culture of philosophy. There are, however, considerations which, if carefully implanted and diligently propagated, might in time overpower and repress it; since no one can nurse it for the sake of pleasure, as its effects are only shame, anguish, and perturbation.

It is, above all other vices, inconsistent with the

character of a social being, because it sacrifices truth and kindness to very weak temptations. He that plunders a wealthy neighbour gains as much as he takes away, and may improve his own condition in the same proportion as he impairs another's; but he that blasts a flourishing reputation must be content with a small dividend of additional fame, so small as can afford very little consolation to balance the guilt by which it is obtained.

I have hitherto avoided that dangerous and empirical morality which cures one vice by means of another; but envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its original and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be preferred. It is one of those lawless enemies of society against which poisoned arrows may honestly be used. Let it, therefore, be constantly remembered, that whoever envies another confesses his superiority, and let those be reformed by their pride who have lost their virtue.

It is no slight aggravation of the injuries which envy incites, that they are committed against those who have given no intentional provocation; and that the sufferer is often marked out for ruin, not because he has failed in any duty, but because he has dared to do more than was required.

Almost every other crime is practised by the help of some quality which might have produced esteem or love if it had been well employed; but envy is mere unmixed and genuine evil; it pursues a hateful end by despicable means, and desires not so much its own happiness as another's misery. To avoid depravity like this, it is not necessary that any one should aspire to heroism or sanctity, but only that he should resolve not to quit the rank which nature assigns him, and wish to maintain the dignity of a human being.

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

"But oh! revenge is sweet.
Thus think the crowd; who, eager to engage,
Take quickly fire, and kindle into rage.
Not so mild Thales, nor Chrysippus thought,
Nor that good man who drank the poisonous draught
With mind serene, and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drink as deep as he:
Exalted Socrates! divinely brave!
Injured he fell, and dying he forgave;
Too noble for revenge; which still we find
The weakest frailty of a feeble mind."

JUV.—DRYDEN'S Trans.

No vicious dispositions of the mind more obstinately resist both the counsels of philosophy and the injunctions of religion, than those which are complicated with an opinion of dignity; and which we cannot dismiss without leaving in the hands of opposition some advantage iniquitously obtained, or suffering from our own prejudices some imputation of pusillanimity.

For this reason, scarcely any law of our Redeemer is more openly transgressed or more industriously evaded than that by which he commands his followers to forgive injuries, and prohibits, under the sanction of eternal misery, the gratification of the desire which every man feels to return pain upon him that inflicts it. Many, who could have conquered their anger, are unable to combat their pride, and pursue offences to extremity of vengeance, lest they should be insulted by the triumph of an enemy.

But certainly no precept could better become him at whose birth *peace* was proclaimed to the earth. For what would so soon destroy all the order of society, and deform life with violence and

ravage, as a permission to every one to judge his own cause, and to apportion his own recompense for imagined injuries.

It is difficult for a man of the strictest justice not to favour himself too much in the calmest moments of solitary meditation. Every one wishes for the distinction for which thousands are wishing at the same time, in their own opinion, with better claims. He that, when his reason operates in its full force, can thus, by the mere prevalence of self-love, prefer himself to his fellow-beings, is very unlikely to judge equitably, when his passions are agitated by a sense of wrong, and his attention wholly engrossed by pain, interest, or danger. Whoever arrogates to himself the right of vengeance, shows how little he is qualified to decide his own claims, since he certainly demands what he would think unfit to be granted to another.

Nothing is more apparent than that, however injured or however provoked, some must at last be contented to forgive. For it can never be hoped that he who first commits an injury will contentedly acquiesce in the penalty required; the same haughtiness of contempt and vehemence of desire that prompt the act of injustice, will more strongly incite its justification; and resentment can never so exactly balance the punishment with the fault, but there will remain an overplus of vengeance, which even he who condemns his first action will think himself entitled to retaliate. What, then, can ensue but a continual exacerbation of hatred, an unextinguishable feud, an incessant reciprocation of mischief, a mutual vigilance to entrap, and eagerness to destroy?

Since, then, the imaginary right of vengeance must be at last remitted, because it is impossible to live in perpetual hostility, and equally impossible that of two enemies either should first think himself obliged by justice to submission, it is surely

eligible to forgive early. Every passion is more easily subdued before it has been long accustomed to possession of the heart; every idea is obliterated with less difficulty, as it has been more slightly impressed and less frequently renewed. He who has often brooded over his wrongs, pleased himself with schemes of malignity, and glutted his pride with the fancied supplications of humbled enmity, will not easily open his bosom to amity and reconciliation, or indulge the gentle sentiments of benevolence and peace.

It is easiest to forgive while there is yet a little to be forgiven. A single injury may be soon dismissed from the memory; but a long succession of ill offices by degrees associates itself with every idea; a long contest involves so many circumstances, that every place and action will recall it to the mind; and fresh remembrance of vexation must still enkindle rage and irritate revenge.

A wise man will make haste to forgive, because he knows the true value of time, and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain. He that willingly suffers the corrosions of inveterate hatred, and gives up his days and nights to the gloom of malice and perturbations of stratagem, cannot surely be said to consult his ease. Resentment is a union of sorrow with malignity; a combination of a passion which all endeavour to avoid, with a passion which all concur to detest. The man who retires to meditate mischief and to exasperate his own rage; whose thoughts are employed only on means of distress and contrivances of ruin; whose mind never pauses from the remembrance of his own sufferings but to indulge some hope of enjoying the calamities of another, may justly be numbered among the most miserable of human beings; among those who are guilty without reward; who have neither the gladness of prosperity nor the calm of innocence.

Whoever considers the weakness both of himself and others, will not long want persuasives to forgiveness. We know not to what degree of malignity any injury is to be imputed, or how much its guilt, if we were to inspect the mind of him that committed it, would be extenuated by mistake, precipitance, or negligence; we cannot be certain how much more we feel than was intended to be inflicted, or how much we increase the mischief to ourselves by voluntary aggravations. We may charge to design the effects of accident; we may think the blow violent only because we have made ourselves delicate and tender; we are on every side in danger of error and guilt, which we are certain to avoid only by speedy forgiveness.

From this pacific and harmless temper, thus propitious to others and ourselves, to domestic tranquillity and to social happiness, no man is withheld but by pride, by the fear of being insulted by his adversary or despised by the world.

It may be laid down as an unfailing and universal axiom, that "all pride is abject and mean." It is always an ignorant, lazy, or cowardly acquiescence in a false appearance of excellence, and proceeds, not from consciousness of our attainments, but insensibility of our wants.

Nothing can be great which is not right. Nothing which reason condemns can be suitable to the dignity of the human mind. To be driven by external motives from the path which our own heart approves; to give way to anything but conviction; to suffer the opinion of others to rule our choice or overpower our resolves, is to submit tamely to the lowest and most ignominious slavery, and to resign the right of directing our own lives.

The utmost excellence at which humanity can arrive, is a constant and determinate pursuit of virtue, without regard to present dangers or advantage; a continual reference of every action to

the Divine will ; an habitual appeal to everlasting justice ; and an unvaried elevation of the intellectual eye to the reward which perseverance only can obtain. But that pride which many who presume to boast of generous sentiments allow to regulate their measures, has nothing nobler in view than the approbation of men ; of beings whose superiority we are under no obligation to acknowledge, and who, when we have courted them with the utmost assiduity, can confer no valuable or permanent reward ; of beings who ignorantly judge of what they do not understand, or partially determine what they never have examined ; and whose sentence is therefore of no weight till it has received the ratification of our own conscience.

He that can descend to bribe suffrages like these at the price of his innocence ; he that can suffer the delight of such acclamations to withhold his attention from the commands of the universal Sovereign, has little reason to congratulate himself upon the greatness of his mind : whenever he awakes to seriousness and reflection, he must become despicable in his own eyes, and shrink with shame from the remembrance of his cowardice and folly.

Of him that hopes to be forgiven, it is indispensably required that he forgive. It is therefore superfluous to urge any other motive. On this great duty eternity is suspended ; and to him that refuse to practise it, the throne of mercy is inaccessible, and the Saviour of the world has been born in vain.

ANNINGAIT AND AJUT: A GREENLAND TALE.

“Place me where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe or warms the trees ;
Where ever-lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th’ inclement year ;
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph, who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles.”
HOR.—FRANCIS’s Trans.

Of the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations and part from our opinions ; part is distributed by nature, and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove. No man can give to his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian groves ; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and, there-

fore, none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of England, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport among woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thoughts towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amid mountains of snow, he will soon recover his tranquillity, and, while he stirs his fire or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth and the severity of the skies in these dreary countries are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct or diversify characters; the summer should be spent only in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into these abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their critics, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of Eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages or cities, a youth and maid, who came from different parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest of the inhabitants *Anningait* and *Ajut*, from a supposed re-

semblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been transformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait for some time heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion ; but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection by inviting her, with her parents, to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tale of a whale. Ajut seemed not much delighted by this gallantry ; yet, however, from that time, was observed rarely to appear but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer ; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress and the judicious disposition of her ornaments had such an effect upon Anningait, that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroic and tender sentiments, he protested that "she was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as thyme upon the mountains ; that her fingers were white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice ; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the Eastern cannibals ; that he would tear her from the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch her from the paws of Amarock, and rescue her from the ravine of Hafgufa." He concludes with a wish, that "whoever shall attempt to hinder his union with Ajut might be buried without his bow, and that in the land of souls his scull might serve for no other use than to catch the droppings of the starry lamps."

This ode being universally applauded, it was expected that Ajut would soon yield to such fervour and accomplishments : but Ajut, with the natural

haughtiness of beauty, expected all the forms of courtship; and, before she would confess herself conquered, the sun returned, the ice broke, and the season of labour called all to their employments.

Anningait and Ajut for a time always went out in the same boat, and divided whatever was caught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, lost no opportunity of signalizing his courage; he attacked the sea-horses on the ice, pursued the seals in the water, and leaped upon the back of the whale while he was yet struggling with the remains of life. Nor was his diligence less to accumulate all that could be necessary to make winter comfortable; he dried the roe of fishes and the flesh of seals; he entrapped deer and foxes, and dressed their skins to adorn his bride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, and strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a distant part of the coast before Anningait had completed his store; he therefore entreated Ajut that she would at last grant him her hand, and accompany him to that part of the country whither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such condescension, but proposed, as a trial of his constancy, that he should return at the end of summer to the cavern where their acquaintance commenced, and there expect the reward of his assiduities. "Oh virgin, beautiful as the sun shining on the water, consider," said Anningait, "what thou hast required. How easily may my return be precluded by a sudden frost or unexpected fogs! Then must the night be passed without my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries which lying strangers so wantonly describe; where the whole year is divided into short days and nights; where the same habitation serves for summer and winter; where they raise houses in rows above the ground, dwell together from year

to year, with flocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about them; can travel at any time from one place to another, through ways enclosed with trees, or over walls raised upon the inland waters; and direct their course through wide countries by the sight of green hills or scattered buildings. Even in summer we have no means of crossing the mountains whose snows are never dissolved; nor can remove to any distant residence, but in our boats coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut, a few summer days and a few winter nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gayety; but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut!"

The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid continued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

Anningait, however discomposed by the dilatory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and therefore presented her, at his departure, with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans, and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship at the price of half a whale, and two horns of sea-unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of her lover, or so much overpowered by his magnificence, that she followed him to the seaside; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood a while to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected, laid aside from that hour her white deer-skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her

shoulders, and forbore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to divert her thoughts by continual application to feminine employments, gathered moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture; and, while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which she prayed "that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the reindeer; that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice nor faint in the water; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain."

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families are always rowed by women; for a man will not debase himself by work which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was therefore exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the stern of the boat with an intent to leap into the water, and swim back to his mistress; but, recollecting the misery which they must endure in the winter without oil for the lamp or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed in wild numbers and uncouth images his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. "Oh life!" says he, "frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure, but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then van-

ishes for ever! What, love, art thou but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape? Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had not yet called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, I was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? Why, my fair, did I call thee to the banquet? Yet be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity. I will chase the deer, I will subdue the whale, resistless as the frost of darkness, and unwearied as the summer sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roefish and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and the hare shall cover thy couch; the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold; and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling."

Anningait having with these sentiments consoled his grief and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw the whales spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing-boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon with incredible courage and dexterity, and, by dividing his time between the chase and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in childbirth, and his father, the most expert fisher of Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four men's and two women's boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five-and-twenty seals buried in the snow against

the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her lover and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated angekkok of that part of the country, and, by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise that, when Ajut should consult him, he would declare that her lover was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and inquired what events were to befall her; with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her desires. The angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret; and Norngsuk, depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but, finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated, she remonstrated, she wept and raved; but, finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to ensnare, taking care, at an hour when she was not likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her lover might not miss her at his return.

At last she saw the great boat in which Anningait had departed stealing slow and heavy laden along the coast. She ran with all the impatience of affection to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached the land, they informed her that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing-boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut, distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her: but when, at last, they retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach, where, finding a fishing-boat, she entered it without hesitation, and, telling those who wondered at her rashness that she was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion that they were changed into stars; others imagine that Anningait was seized in his passage by the genius of the rocks; and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is, that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay from which the hapless maid departed; and, when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

ART OF PLEASING IN CONVERSATION.

"The more I honour thee, the less I love."—MART.

None of the desires dictated by vanity is more general, or less blameable, than that of being distinguished for the arts of conversation. Other accomplishments may be possessed without opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without danger that the defect can often be remarked ; but, as no man can live, otherwise than in a hermitage, without hourly pleasure or vexation, from the fondness or neglect of those about him, the faculty of giving pleasure is of continual use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the power of forcing attention wherever they come ; whose entrance is considered as a promise of felicity, and whose departure is lamented, like the recess of the sun from northern climates, as a privation of all that enlivens fancy or inspirits gayety.

It is apparent that, to excellence in this valuable art, some peculiar qualifications are necessary ; for every one's experience will inform him, that the pleasure which men are able to give in conversation holds no stated proportion to their knowledge or their virtue. Many find their way to the tables and the parties of those who never consider them as of the least importance in any other place ; we have all, at one time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem, and been persuaded to try the dangerous experiment of admitting him for a companion whom we knew to be too ignorant for a counsellor and too treacherous for a friend.

I question whether some abatement of character

is not necessary to general acceptance. Few spend their time with such satisfaction under the eye of incontestable superiority ; and therefore, among those whose presence is courted at assemblies of jollity, there are seldom found men eminently distinguished for powers or acquisitions. The wit, whose vivacity condemns slower tongues to silence ; the scholar, whose knowledge allows no man to fancy that he instructs him ; the critic, who suffers no fallacy to pass undetected ; and the reasoner, who condemns the idle to thought and the negligent to attention, are generally praised and feared, revered and avoided.

He that would please must rarely aim at such excellence as depresses his hearers in their own opinion, or debars them from the hope of contributing reciprocally to the entertainment of the company. Merriment, extorted by sallies of imagination, sprightliness of remark, or quickness of reply, is too often what the Latins call the Sardinian laughter, a distortion of the face without gladness of heart.

For this reason, no style of conversation is more extensively acceptable than the narrative. He who has stored his memory with slight anecdotes, private incidents, and personal peculiarities, seldom fails to find his audience favourable. Almost every man listens with eagerness to contemporary history, for almost every man has some real or imaginary connexion with a celebrated character ; some desire to advance or oppose a rising name. Vanity often co-operates with curiosity. He that is a hearer in one place qualifies himself to become a speaker in another ; for, though he cannot comprehend a series of argument, or transport the volatile spirit of wit without evaporation, yet he thinks himself able to treasure up the various incidents of a story, and pleases his hopes with the information which he shall give to some inferior society.

Narratives are, for the most part, heard without envy, because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual qualities above the common rate. To be acquainted with facts not yet echoed by plebeian mouths may happen to one man as well as to another; and to relate them when they are known has in appearance so little difficulty, that every one concludes himself equal to the task.

But it is not easy, and, in some situations of life, not possible, to accumulate such a stock of materials as may support the expense of continual narration; and it frequently happens, that they who attempt this method of ingratiating themselves please only at the first interview, and, for want of new supplies of intelligence, wear out their stories by continual repetition.

There would be, therefore, little hope of obtaining the praise of a good companion, were it not to be granted by more compendious methods; but such is the kindness of mankind to all except those who aspire to real merit and rational dignity, that every understanding may find some way to excite benevolence, and whoever is not envied may learn the art of procuring love. We are willing to be pleased, but are not willing to admire: we favour the mirth or officiousness that solicits our regard, but oppose the worth or spirit that enforces it.

The first place among those that please, because they desire only to please, is due to the *merry fellow*, whose laugh is loud and whose voice is strong; who is ready to echo every jest with obstreperous approbation, and countenance every frolic with vociferations of applause. It is not necessary to a merry fellow to have in himself any fund of jocularity or force of conception: it is sufficient that he always appears in the highest exaltation of gladness; for the greater part of mankind are gay or

serous by infection, and follow without resistance the attraction of example.

Next to the merry fellow is the *good-natured man*, a being generally without benevolence, or any other virtue than such as indolence and insensibility confer. The characteristic of a good-natured man is to bear a joke ; to sit unmoved and unaffected amid noise and turbulence, profaneness and obscenity ; to hear every tale without contradiction ; to endure insult without reply ; and to follow the stream of folly, whatever course it shall happen to take. The good-natured man is commonly the darling of the petty wits, with whom they exercise themselves in the rudiments of raillery ; for he never takes advantage of failings, nor disconcerts a puny satirist with unexpected sarcasms ; but, while the glass continues to circulate, contentedly bears the expense of uninterrupted laughter, and retires rejoicing at his own importance.

The *modest man* is a companion of a yet lower rank, whose only power of giving pleasure is not to interrupt it. The modest man satisfies himself with peaceful silence, which all his companions are candid enough to consider as proceeding, not from inability to speak, but willingness to hear.

Many, without being able to attain any general character of excellence, have some single art of entertainment which serves them as a passport through the world. One I have known for fifteen years the darling of a weekly club, because every night, precisely at eleven, he begins his favourite song, and, during the vocal performance, by corresponding motions of his hand, chalks out a giant upon the wall. Another has endeared himself to a long succession of acquaintances by sitting among them with his wig reversed ; another by contriving to smut the nose of any stranger who was to be initiated in the club ; another by purring like a cat, and then pretending to be frightened ; and another by

yelping like a hound, and calling to the drawers to drive out the dog.

Such are the arts by which cheerfulness is promoted, and sometimes friendship established ; arts which those who despise them should not rigorously blame, except when they are practised at the expense of innocence ; for it is always necessary to be loved, but not always necessary to be reverenced.

MORAD AND ABOUZAID : AN EASTERN TALE.

“Henry and Alfred—

Closed their long glories with a sigh, to find
Th’ unwilling gratitude of base mankind.”

HOR.—POPE’S TRANS.

AMONG the emirs and viziers, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne to assist the counsels or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the first place was long held by Morad the son of Hanuth. Morad, having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wasted to the pinnacles of Agra by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The emperor called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the key of riches and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Indian Ocean ; every tongue faltered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity ; even

day increased his wealth and extended his influence. The sages repeated his maxims, the captains of thousands waited his commands. Competition withdrew into the cavern of envy, and discontent trembled at her own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory, as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad, the clouds of sorrow gathered round his head, and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that forsook him were his poets; their example was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures; and only a few, whose virtue had entitled them to favour, were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud, his friends stood contented with frigid neutrality, and the voice of truth was overborne by clamour. He was divested of his power, deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants and flattery, that he knew not how to fill up his hours in solitude; he saw with regret the sun rise to force on his eye a new day for which he had no use; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey or sleeping in his den.

His discontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physic, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch peevish and restless, rather afraid to die than desirous to live. His domestics, for a time, redoubled their assiduities; but, finding that no officiousness could sooth nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth; and he that once

commanded nations often languished in his
ber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state he commanded me
gers to recall his eldest son, Abouzaid, from
army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account
father's sickness, and hastened by long journeys
his place of residence. Morad was yet living
felt his strength return at the embraces of his son.
then commanding him to sit down at his bed-side.
"Abouzaid," said he, "thy father has no more
hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth.
cold hand of the angel of death is now upon
and the voracious grave is howling for his
Hear, therefore, the precepts of ancient experience
let not my last instructions issue forth in
Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous :
hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My life
is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures
rewarded my accusers ; but my inheritance
clemency of the emperor has spared, and my
dom his anger could not take away. Cast
eyes round thee ; whatever thou beholdest within
a few hours, be thine ; apply thine ear to my
tates, and these possessions will promote thy
piness. Aspire not to public honours, enter
the palaces of kings ; thy wealth will set
above insult, let thy moderation keep thee from
envy. Content thyself with private dignity, and
thy riches among thy friends ; let every day exercise
thy beneficence, and suffer not thy heart to
rest till thou art loved by all to whom thou
known. In the height of my power I said to
myself, Who will hear thee ? and to Artifice,
canst thou perform ? But, my son, despise not
the malice of the weakest ; remember that a
viper supplies the want of strength, and that the lion
perish by the puncture of an asp."

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid, after
the months of mourning, determined to regulate

conduct by his father's precepts, and cultivate the love of mankind by every act of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered that domestic happiness was first to be secured, and that none have so much power of doing good or hurt as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the bursts of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants, and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers, who, being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of his servants; the servant immediately confessed that he unbarred the door, because another, not more worthy of confidence, was intrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced that a dependant could not easily be made a friend; and that, while many were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought himself at liberty to indulge his own caprice and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations and difference of sentiments, and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterward determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a larger circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy, and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship now refused to accept his acquaintance; and of

those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward towards his intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured because he was not distinguished above the rest. By degrees, all made advances and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the music sounded in empty rooms; and Abouzaid was left to form in solitude some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science, whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wanted in unexperienced plenty, and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which they had been rescued, and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs and dismissed them, and from that hour continued blind to colours and deaf to panegyric.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. "Hamet," said he, "thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments. I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be rewarded by human benevolence; I shall henceforth do good and avoid evil, without respect to the opinions of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being, whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him."

THE LOVE OF PRAISE.

“ Or art thou vain ? books yield a certain spell
To stop thy tumour ; you shall cease to swell
When you have read them thrice, and studied well.”
HOR.—CREECH’s *Trans.*

WHATEVER is universally desired, will be sought by industry and artifice, by merit and crimes, by means good and bad, rational and absurd, according to the prevalence of virtue or vice, of wisdom or folly. Some will always mistake the degree of their own desert, and some will desire that others may mistake it. The cunning will have recourse to stratagem, and the powerful to violence, for the attainment of their wishes ; some will stoop to theft, and others venture upon plunder.

Praise is so pleasing to the mind of man, that it is the original motive of almost all our actions. The desire of commendation, as of everything else, is varied, indeed, by innumerable differences of temper, capacity, and knowledge ; some have no higher wish than for the applause of a club ; some expect the acclamations of a county ; and some have hoped to fill the mouths of all ages and nations with their names. Every man pants for the highest eminence within his view ; none, however mean, ever sinks below the hope of being distinguished by his fellow-beings ; and very few have, by magnanimity or piety, been so raised above it as to act wholly without regard to censure or opinion.

To be praised, therefore, every man resolves ; but resolutions will not execute themselves. That which all think too parsimoniously distributed to their own claims, they will not gratuitously squan-

der upon others ; and some expedient must be tried, by which praise may be gained before it can be enjoyed.

Among the innumerable bidders for praise, some are willing to purchase at the highest rate, and offer ease and health, fortune and life. Yet even of these only a small part have gained what they so earnestly desired ; the student wastes away in meditation, and the soldier perishes on the ramparts ; but, unless some accidental advantage co-operates with merit, neither perseverance nor advantage attracts attention, and learning and bravery sink into the grave without honour or remembrance.

But ambition and vanity generally expect to be gratified on easier terms. It has been long observed, that what is procured by skill or labour to the first possessor, may be afterward transferred for money ; and that the man of wealth may partake of all the acquisitions of courage without hazard, and all the products of industry without fatigue. It was easily discovered that riches would obtain praise among other conveniences, and that he whose pride was unluckily associated with laziness, ignorance, or cowardice, need only to pay the hire of a panegyrist, and he might be regaled with periodical eulogies ; might determine at leisure what virtue or science he would be pleased to appropriate, and be lulled in the evening with soothing serenades, or waked in the morning by sprightly gratulations.

The happiness which mortals receive from the celebration of beneficence which never relieved, eloquence which never persuaded, or elegance which never pleased, ought not to be envied or disturbed when they are known honestly to pay for their entertainment. But there are unmerciful *ex-actors of adulation* who withhold the wages of *venality* ; retain their encomiast from year to year by

general promises and ambiguous blandishments ; and, when he has run through the whole compass of flattery, dismiss him with contempt because his vein of fiction is exhausted.

A continual feast of commendation is only to be obtained by merit or by wealth ; many are therefore obliged to content themselves with single morsels, and recompense the infrequency of their enjoyment by excess and riot whenever fortune sets the banquet before them. Hunger is never delicate ; they who are seldom gorged to the full with praise may be safely fed with gross compliments ; for the appetite must be satisfied before it is disgusted.

It is easy to find the moment at which vanity is eager for sustenance, and all that impudence or servility can offer will be well received. When any one complains of the want of what he is known to possess in an uncommon degree, he certainly waits with impatience to be contradicted. When the trader pretends anxiety about the payment of his bills, or the beauty remarks how frightfully she looks, then is the lucky moment to talk of riches or of charms, of the death of lovers or the honour of a merchant.

Others there are yet more open and artless, who, instead of suborning a flatterer, are content to supply his place, and to swell with the praises which they hear from their own tongues. "It is right," says Erasmus, "that he whom no one else will commend should bestow commendations on himself." Of all the sons of vanity, these are surely the happiest and greatest ; for what is greatness or happiness but independence of external influences, exemption from hope or fear, and the power of supplying every want from the common stores of nature, which can neither be exhausted nor prohibited ? Such is the wise man of the Stoics, such is the divinity of the Epicureans, and such is the flat-

terer of himself. Every other enjoyment malice may destroy, every other panegyric envy may withhold, but no human power can deprive the boaster of his own encomiums. Infamy may hiss, or contempt may growl; the hirelings of the great may follow fortune, and the votaries of truth may attend on virtue, but his pleasures still remain the same; he can always listen with rapture to himself, and leave those who dare not repose upon their own attestation to be elated or depressed by chance, and toil on in the hopeless task of fixing caprice and propitiating malice.

This art of happiness has been long practised by periodical writers with little apparent violation of decency. When we think our excellences overlooked by the world, or desire to recall the attention of the public to some particular performance, we sit down with great composure and write a letter to ourselves. The correspondent, whose character we assume, always addresses us with the deference due to a superior intelligence; proposes his doubts with a proper sense of his own inability; offers an objection with trembling diffidence; and at last has no other pretensions to our notice than his profoundity of respect and sincerity of admiration, his submission to our dictates and zeal for our success. To such a reader it is impossible to refuse regard; nor can it easily be imagined with how much alacrity we snatch up the pen which indignation or despair had condemned to inactivity, when we find such candour and judgment yet remaining in the world.

A letter of this kind I had lately the honour of perusing, in which, though some of the periods were negligently closed, and some expressions of familiarity were used which I thought might teach others to address me with too little reverence, I was so much delighted with the passages in which mention was made of universal learning—unbound-

ed genius—soul of Homer, Pythagoras, and Plato—solidity of thought—accuracy of distinction—elegance of combination—vigour of fancy—strength of reason—and regularity of composition—that I had once determined to lay it before the public. Three times I sent it to the printer, and three times I fetched it back. My modesty was on the point of yielding, when, reflecting that I was about to waste panegyrics on myself which might be more profitably reserved for my patron, I locked it up for a better hour, in compliance with the farmer's principle, who never eats at home what he can carry to the market.

DIFFERENCE OF VIEWS IN THE OLD AND YOUNG.

“The blessings flowing in with life's full tide,
Down with our ebb of life decreasing glide.”
HOR.—FRANCIS's *Trans.*

BAXTER, in the narrative of his own life, has enumerated seven opinions, which, though he thought them evident and incontestable at his first entrance into the world, time and experience disposed him to change.

Whoever reviews the state of his own mind from the dawn of manhood to its decline, and considers what he pursued or dreaded, slighted or esteemed, at different periods of his age, will have no reason to imagine such changes of sentiment peculiar to any station or character. Every man, however careless and inattentive, has conviction forced upon him; the lectures of time obtrude themselves upon the *most unwilling* or dissipated auditor; and, by

comparing our past with our present thoughts, we perceive that we have changed our minds, though, perhaps, we cannot discover when the alteration happened, or by what causes it was produced.

This revolution of sentiments occasions a perpetual contest between the old and young. They who imagine themselves entitled to veneration by the prerogative of longer life, are inclined to treat the notions of those whose conduct they superintend with superciliousness and contempt, for want of considering that the future and the past have different appearances; that the disproportion will always be great between expectation and enjoyment, between new possessions and satiety; that the truth of many maxims of age gives too little pleasure to be allowed till it is felt; and that the miseries of life would be increased beyond all human power of endurance, if we were to enter the world with the same opinions as we carry from it.

We naturally indulge those ideas that please us. Hope will predominate in every mind till it has been suppressed by frequent disappointments. The youth has not yet discovered how many evils are continually hovering about us, and, when he is free from the shackles of discipline, looks abroad into the world with rapture; he sees an elysian region open before him, so variegated with beauty and so stored with pleasure, that his care is rather to accumulate good than to shun evil; he stands distracted by different forms of delight, and has no other doubt than which path to follow of those which all lead equally to the bowers of happiness.

He who has seen only the superficies of life believes everything to be what it appears, and rarely suspects that external splendour conceals any latent sorrow or vexation. He never imagines that there may be greatness without safety, affluence without content, jollity without friendship, and solitude without peace. He fancies himself permitted to cull the

blessings of every condition, and to leave its inconveniences to the idle and the ignorant. He is inclined to believe no man miserable but by his own fault, and seldom looks with much pity upon failings or miscarriages, because he thinks them willingly admitted or negligently incurred.

It is impossible, without pity and contempt, to hear a youth of generous sentiments and warm imagination declaring, in the moment of openness and confidence, his designs and expectations ; because long life is possible, he considers it as certain, and therefore promises himself all the changes of happiness, and provides gratifications for every desire. He is, for a time, to give himself wholly to frolic and diversion, to range the world in search of pleasure, to delight every eye, to gain every heart, and to be celebrated equally for his pleasing levities and solid attainments, his deep reflections and his sparkling repartees. He then elevates his views to nobler enjoyments, and finds all the scattered excellences of the female world united in a woman who prefers his addresses to wealth and titles ; he is afterward to engage in business, to dissipate difficulty, and overpower opposition ; to climb, by the mere force of merit, to fame and greatness ; and to reward all those who countenanced his rise, or paid due regard to his early excellence. At last he will retire in peace and honour ; contract his views to domestic pleasures ; form the manners of children like himself ; observe how every year expands the beauty of his daughters, and how his sons catch ardour from their father's history ; he will give laws to the neighbourhood, dictate axioms to posterity, and leave the world an example of wisdom and happiness.

With hopes like these, he sallies jocund into life ; to little purpose he is told that the condition of humanity admits no pure and unmixed happiness ; that the exuberant gayety of youth ends in poverty,

or disease; that uncommon qualifications and contrarieties of excellence produce envy equally with applause; that, whatever admiration and fondness may promise him, he must marry a wife like the wives of others, with some virtues and some faults; and be as often disgusted by her vices as delighted by her elegance; that if he adventures into the circle of action, he must expect to encounter men as artful, as daring, as resolute as himself; that of his children, some may be deformed and others vicious; some may disgrace him by their follies, some offend him by their insolence, and some exhaust him by their profusion. He hears all this with an obstinate incredulity, and wonders by what malignity old age is influenced, that it cannot forbear to fill his ears with predictions of misery.

Among other pleasing errors of young minds is the opinion of their own importance. He that has not yet remarked how little attention his contemporaries can spare from their own affairs, conceives all eyes turned upon himself, and imagines every one that approaches him to be an enemy or a follower, an admirer or a spy. He therefore considers his fame as involved in the event of every action. Many of the virtues and vices of youth proceed from this quick sense of reputation. This it is that gives firmness and constancy, fidelity and disinterestedness, and it is this that kindles resentment for slight injuries, and dictates all the principles of sanguinary honour.

But, as time brings him forward into the world, he soon discovers that he only shares fame or reproach with innumerable partners; that he is left unmarked in the obscurity of the crowd; and that what he does, whether good or bad, soon gives way to new objects of regard. He then easily sets himself *free from the anxieties of reputation, and considers praise or censure as a transient breath, which, while he hears it, is passing away without any lasting mischief or advantage.*

In youth it is common to measure right and wrong by the opinion of the world, and in age to act without any measure but interest, and to lose shame without substituting virtue.

Such is the condition of life, that something is always wanting to happiness. In youth we have warm hopes, which are soon blasted by rashness and negligence, and great designs, which are defeated by inexperience. In age we have knowledge and prudence, without spirit to exert or motives to prompt them; we are able to plan schemes and regulate measures, but have not time remaining to bring them to completion.

THE LEGACY HUNTER.

"Say to what vulture's share this carcass falls."
MART.—LEWIS'S *Trans.*

I BELONG to an order of mankind, considerable at least for their number, to which your notice has never been formally extended, though equally entitled to regard with those triflers who have hitherto supplied you with topics of amusement or instruction. I am a legacy-hunter; and, as every man is willing to think well of the tribe in which his name is registered, you will forgive my vanity if I remind you that the legacy-hunter, however degraded by an ill-compounded appellation in our barbarous language, was known, as I am told, in ancient Rome, by the sonorous titles of *captator* and *hæredipeta*.

My father was an attorney in the country, who married his master's daughter in hopes of a fortune which he did not obtain; having been, as he afterward discovered, chosen by her only because she had no better offer, and was afraid of service. I was

the first offspring of a marriage thus reciprocally fraudulent, and therefore could not be expected to inherit much dignity or generosity; and, if I had them not from nature, was not likely ever to attain them; for, in the years which I spent at home, I never heard any reason for action or forbearance but that we should gain money or lose it; nor was taught any other style of commendation than that Mr. Sneaker is a warm man, Mr. Gripe has done his business, and needs care for nobody.

My parents, though otherwise not great philosophers, knew the force of early education, and took care that the blank of my understanding should be filled with impressions of the value of money. My mother used, upon all occasions, to inculcate some salutary axioms, such as might incite me to *keep what I had and get what I could*; she informed me that we were in a world where *all must catch that catch can*; and, as I grew up, stored my inemory with deeper observations; restrained me from the usual puerile expenses, by remarking that *many a little makes a mickle*; and, when I envied the finery of my neighbours, told me that *brag was a good dog, but holdfast was a better*.

I was soon sagacious enough to discover that I was not born to great wealth; and, having heard no other name for happiness, was sometimes inclined to pine at my condition. But my mother always relieved me by saying that there was money enough in the family; that *it was good to be of kin to means*; that I had nothing to do but to please my friends, and I might come to hold up my head with the best squire in the country.

These splendid expectations arose from our alliance to three persons of considerable fortune. My mother's aunt had attended on a lady who, when she died, rewarded her officiousness and fidelity with *a large legacy*. My father had two relations, of whom one had broken his indentures and run to sea,

from whence, after an absence of thirty years, he returned with ten thousand pounds ; and the other had lured an heiress out of a window, who, dying of her first child, had left him her estate, on which he lived, without any other care than to collect his rents and preserve from poachers that game which he could not kill himself.

These hoarders of money were visited and courted by all who had any pretence to approach them, and received presents and compliments from cousins who could scarcely tell the degree of their relation. But we had peculiar advantages, which encouraged us to hope that we should, by degrees, supplant our competitors. My father, by his profession, made himself necessary in their affairs ; for the sailor and the chambermaid he inquired out mortgages and securities, and wrote bonds and contracts ; and had endeared himself to the old woman, who once rashly lent a hundred pounds without consulting him, by informing her that her debtor was on the point of bankruptcy, and posting so expeditiously with an execution that all the other creditors were defrauded.

To the squire he was a kind of steward, and had distinguished himself in his office by his address in raising the rents, his inflexibility in distressing the tardy tenants, and his acuteness in setting the parish free from burdensome inhabitants, by shifting them off to some other settlement.

Business made frequent attendance necessary, trust soon produced intimacy, and success gave a claim to kindness, so that we had opportunity to practise all the arts of flattery and endearment. My mother, who could not support the thought of losing anything, determined that all their fortunes should centre in me ; and, in the prosecution of her schemes, took care to inform me that *nothing cost less than good words*, and that it is comfortable to leap into an estate which another has got.

She trained me by these precepts to the utmost ductility of obedience and the closest attention to profit. At an age when other boys are sporting in the fields or murmuring in the school, I was contriving some new method of paying my court, inquiring the age of my future benefactors, or considering how I should employ their legacies.

If our eagerness for money could have been satisfied with the possessions of any one of my relations, they might, perhaps, have been obtained; but as it was impossible to be always present with all three, our competitors were busy to efface any trace of affection which we might have left behind; and since there was not, on any part, such superiority of merit as could enforce a constant and unshaken preference, whoever was the last that flattered or obliged had for a time the ascendant.

My relations maintained a regular exchange of courtesy, took care to miss no occasion of condolence or congratulation, and sent presents at stated times, but had in their hearts not much esteem for one another. The seaman looked with contempt upon the squire as a milksop and a landman, who had lived without knowing the points of the compass, or seeing any part of the world beyond the county-town; and, whenever they met, would talk of longitude and latitude, and circles and tropics; would scarcely tell him the hour without some mention of the horizon and meridian, nor show him the news without detecting his ignorance of the situation of other countries.

The squire considered the sailor as a rude, uncultivated savage, with little more of human than his form, and diverted himself with his ignorance of all common objects and affairs; when he could persuade him to go into the fields, he always exposed him to the sportsmen, by sending him to look for game in improper places; and once prevailed upon him to be present at the races, only that he

might show the gentlemen how a sailor sat upon a horse.

The old gentlewoman thought herself wiser than both, for she lived with no servant but a maid, and saved her money. The others were indeed sufficiently frugal; but the squire could not live without dogs and horses, and the sailor never suffered the day to pass but over a bowl of punch, to which, as he was not critical in the choice of his company, every man was welcome that could roar out a catch or tell a story.

All these, however, I was to please; an arduous task; but what will not youth and avarice undertake? I had an unresisting suppleness of temper, and an insatiable wish for riches; I was perpetually instigated by the ambition of my parents, and assisted occasionally by their instructions. As I was taught to flatter with the first essays of speech, and had very early lost every other passion in the desire of money, I began my pursuit with omens of success; for I divided my officiousness so judiciously among my relations, that I was equally the favourite of all. When any of them entered the door, I went to welcome him with raptures; when he went away, I hung down my head, and sometimes entreated to go with him with so much importunity, that I very narrowly escaped a consent which I dreaded in my heart. When, at an annual entertainment, they were all together, I had a harder task; but plied them so impatiently with caresses, that none could charge me with neglect; and, when they were wearied with my fondness and civilities, I was always dismissed with money to buy playthings.

Life cannot be kept at a stand; the years of innocence and prattle were soon at an end, and other qualifications were necessary to recommend me to continuance of kindness. It luckily happened that none of my friends had high notions of book-learning. The sailor hated to see tall boys shut up *in a school*, when they might more properly be seen

ing the world and making their fortunes ; and was of opinion that, when the first rules of arithmetic were known, all that was necessary to make a man complete might be learned on shipboard. The squire only insisted that so much scholarship was indispensably necessary as might confer ability to draw a lease and read the court-hands ; and the old chambermaid declared loudly her contempt of books, and her opinion that they only took the head of the main chance.

To unite, as well as we could, all their systems, I was bred at home. Each was taught to believe that I followed his directions, and I gained likewise, as my mother observed, this advantage, that I was always in the way ; for she had known many favourite children sent to schools or academies, and forgotten.

As I grew fitter to be trusted to my own discretion, I was often despatched, upon various pretences, to visit my relations, with directions from my parents how to ingratiate myself and drive away competitors.

I was, from my infancy, considered by the sailor as a promising genius, because I liked punch better than wine ; and I took care to improve this prepossession by continual inquiries about the art of navigation ; the degree of heat and cold in different climates ; the profits of trade, and the dangers of shipwreck. I admired the courage of the seaman, and gained his heart by importuning him for a recital of his adventures and a sight of his foreign curiosities. I listened, with an appearance of close attention, to stories which I could already repeat, and, at the close, never failed to express my resolution to visit distant countries, and my contempt of the cowards and drones that spend all their lives in their native parish ; though I had, in reality, no desire of anything but money, nor ever felt the stimulations of curiosity or ardour of adventure, but

would contentedly have passed the years of Nestor in receiving rents and lending upon mortgages.

The squire I was able to please with less hypocrisy, for I really thought it pleasant enough to kill the game and eat it. Some arts of falsehood, however, the *hunger of gold*, persuaded me to practise, by which, though no other mischief was produced, the purity of my thoughts was vitiated, and the reverence for truth gradually destroyed. I sometimes purchased fish, and pretended to have caught them; I hired the countrymen to show me partridges, and then gave my uncle intelligence of their haunt; I learned the seats of hares at night, and discovered them in the morning with a sagacity that raised the envy and wonder of old sportsmen. One only obstruction to the advancement of my reputation I could never fully surmount; I was naturally a coward, and was, therefore, left shamefully behind when there was a necessity to leap a hedge, to swim a river, or force the horses to their utmost speed; but, as these exigences did not frequently happen, I maintained my honour with sufficient success, and was never left out of a hunting party.

The old chambermaid was not so certainly nor so easily pleased; for she had no predominant passion but avarice, and was therefore cold and inaccessible. She had no conception of any virtue in a young man but that of saving his money. When she heard of my exploits in the field, she would shake her head, inquire how much I should be the richer for all my performances, and lament that such sums should be spent upon dogs and horses. If the sailor told her of my inclination to travel, she was sure there was no place like England, and could not imagine why any man that can live in his own country should leave it. This sullen and frigid being I found means, however, to propitiate, by frequent commendations of frugality and perpetual care to avoid expense.

From the sailor was our first and most considerable expectation ; for he was richer than the chambermaid, and older than the squire. He was so awkward and bashful among women, that we concluded him secure from matrimony ; and the noisy fondness with which he used to welcome me to his house, made us imagine that he would look out for no other heir, and that we had nothing to do but wait patiently for his death. But, in the midst of our triumph, my uncle saluted us one morning with a cry of transport, and, clapping his hand hard on my shoulder, told me I was a happy fellow to have a friend like him in the world, for he came to fit me out for a voyage with one of his old acquaintances. I turned pale and trembled ; my father told him that he believed my constitution not fitted to the sea ; and my mother, bursting into tears, cried out that her heart would break if she lost me. All this had no effect ; the sailor was wholly insusceptive of the softer passions ; and, without regard to tears or arguments, persisted in his resolution to make me a man.

We were obliged to comply in appearance, and preparations were accordingly made. I took leave of my friends with great alacrity, proclaimed the beneficence of my uncle with the highest strains of gratitude, and rejoiced at the opportunity now put into my hands of gratifying my thirst of knowledge. But a week before the day appointed for my departure, I fell sick by my mother's direction, and refused all food but what she privately brought me ; whenever my uncle visited me I was lethargic or delirious, but took care in my raving fits to talk incessantly of travel and merchandise. The room was kept dark ; the table was filled with vials and gallipots ; my mother was with difficulty persuaded not to endanger her life with nocturnal attendance ; my father lamented the loss of the profits of the voyage ; and such superfluity of artifices was em-

ployed, as, perhaps, might have discovered the cheat to a man of penetration. But the sailor, unacquainted with subtleties and stratagems, was easily deluded ; and, as the ship could not stay for my recovery, sold the cargo, and left me to re-establish my health at leisure.

I was sent to regain my flesh in a purer air, lest it should appear never to have been wasted ; and in two months returned to deplore my disappointment. My uncle pitied my dejection, and bid me prepare myself against next year, for no land-lubber should touch his money.

A reprieve, however, was obtained, and perhaps some new stratagem might have succeeded another spring ; but my uncle, unhappily, made amorous advances to my mother's maid ; who, to promote so advantageous a match, discovered the secret, with which only she had been intrusted. He stormed and raved, and declaring that he would have heirs of his own, and not give his substance to cheats and cowards, married the girl in two days, and has now four children.

Cowardice is always scorned, and deceit universally detested. I found my friends, if not wholly alienated, at least cooled in their affections ; the squire, though he did not wholly discard me, was less fond, and often inquired when I would go to sea. I was obliged to bear his insults, and endeavoured to rekindle his kindness by assiduity and respect ; but all my care was vain ; he died without a will, and the estate devolved to the legal heir.

Thus has the folly of my parents condemned me to spend in flattery and attendance those years in which I might have been qualified to place myself above hope or fear. I am arrived at manhood, without any useful art or generous sentiment ; and, if the old woman should likewise at last deceive me, am in danger at once of beggary and ignorance.

NEGLECT OF PUNCTUALITY IN FULFIL- LING ENGAGEMENTS.

"Convince the world that you're devout and true ;
Be just in all you say and all you do ;
Whatever be your birth, you're sure to be
A peer of the first magnitude to me."

Juv.—STEPNEY's *Trans.*

BOYLE has observed, that the excellence of manufactures and the facility of labour would be much promoted, if the various expedients and contrivances which lie concealed in private hands were, by reciprocal communications, made generally known; for there are few operations that are not performed by one or other with some peculiar advantages, which, though singly of little importance, would, by conjunction and concurrence, open new inlets to knowledge and give new powers to diligence.

There are, in like manner, several moral excellences distributed among the different classes of a community. It was said by Cujacius, that he never read more than one book by which he was not instructed; and he that shall inquire after virtue with ardour and attention, will seldom find a man by whose example or sentiments he may not be improved.

Every profession has some essential and appropriate virtue, without which there can be no hope of honour or success, and which, as it is more or less cultivated, consers within the sphere of its activity different degrees of merit and reputation. As the astrologers range the subdivisions of mankind under the planets which they suppose to influence their lives, the moralist may distribute them according to the virtues which they necessarily practise, and

consider them as distinguished by prudence or fortitude, diligence or patience.

So much are the modes of excellence settled by time and place, that men may be heard boasting in one street of that which they would anxiously conceal in another. The grounds of scorn and esteem, the topics of praise and satire, are varied according to the several virtues or vices which the course of life has disposed men to admire or abhor; but he who is solicitous for his own improvement must not be limited by local reputation, but select from every tribe of mortals their characteristical virtues, and constellate in himself the scattered graces which shine singly in other men.

The chief praise to which a trader aspires is that of punctuality, or an exact and rigorous observance of commercial engagements; nor is there any vice of which he so much dreads the imputation as of negligence and instability. This is a quality which the interest of mankind requires to be diffused through all the ranks of life, but which many seem to consider as a vulgar and ignoble virtue, below the ambition of greatness or attention of wit, scarcely requisite among men of gayety and spirit, and sold at its highest rate when it is sacrificed to a frolic or a jest.

Every man has daily occasion to remark what vexations arise from this privilege of deceiving one another. The active and vivacious have so long disdained the restraints of truth, that promises and appointments have lost their cogency, and both parties neglect their stipulations, because each concludes that they will be broken by the other.

Negligence is first admitted in small affairs, and strengthened by petty indulgences. He that is not yet hardened by custom, ventures not on the violation of important engagements, but thinks himself bound by his word in cases of property or danger, though he allows himself to forget at what time he

is to meet ladies in the park, or at what house his friends are expecting him.

But he that suffers the slightest breach in his morality can seldom tell what shall enter it or how wide it shall be made; when a passage is open, the influx of corruption is every moment wearing down opposition, and by slow degrees deluges the heart.

Aliger entered the world a youth of lively imagination, extensive views, and untainted principles. His curiosity incited him to range from place to place, and try all the varieties of conversation; his elegance of address and fertility of ideas gained him friends wherever he appeared; or, at least, he found the general kindness of reception always shown to a young man whose birth and fortune give him a claim to notice, and who has neither by vice nor folly destroyed his privileges. Aliger was pleased with this general smile of mankind, and was industrious to preserve it by compliance and officiousness, but did not suffer his desire of pleasing to vitiate his integrity. It was his established maxim, that a promise is never to be broken; nor was it without long reluctance that he once suffered himself to be drawn away from a festal engagement by the importunity of another company.

He spent the evening, as is usual, in the rudiments of vice, in perturbation and imperfect enjoyment, and met his disappointed friends in the morning with confusion and excuses. His companions, not accustomed to such scrupulous anxiety, laughed at his uneasiness, compounded the offence for a bottle, gave him courage to break his word again, and again levied the penalty. He ventured the same experiment upon another society, and found them equally ready to consider it as a venial fault, always incident to a man of quickness and gayety; till, by degrees, he began to think himself at liberty to follow the last invitation, and was no longer shocked at the turpitude of falsehood. He made no

difficulty to promise his presence at distant places ; and, if listlessness happened to creep upon him, would sit at home with great tranquillity, and has often sunk to sleep in a chair while he held ten tables in continual expectations of his entrance.

It was so pleasant to live in perpetual vacancy, that he soon dismissed his attention as a useless encumbrance, and resigned himself to carelessness and dissipation, without any regard to the future or the past, or any other motive of action than the impulse of a sudden desire or the attraction of immediate pleasure. The absent were immediately forgotten, and the hopes or fears felt by others had no influence upon his conduct. He was in speculation completely just, but never kept his promise to a creditor ; he was benevolent, but always deceived those friends whom he undertook to patronise or assist ; he was prudent, but suffered his affairs to be embarrassed for want of regulating his accounts at stated times. He courted a young lady, and, when the settlements were drawn, took a ramble into the country on the day appointed to sign them. He resolved to travel, and sent his chests on ship-board, but delayed to follow them till he lost his passage. He was summoned as an evidence in a cause of great importance, and loitered on the way till the trial was past. It is said that, when he had, with great expense, formed an interest in a borough, his opponent contrived, by some agents who knew his temper, to lure him away on the day of election.

His benevolence draws him into the commission of a thousand crimes, which others less kind or civil would escape. His courtesy invites application ; his promise produces dependance ; he has his pockets filled with petitions, which he intends some time to deliver and enforce, and his table covered with letters of request, with which he purposed to comply : but time slips imperceptibly away, while

he is either idle or busy ; his friends lose their opportunities, and charge upon him their miscarriages and calamities.

This character, however contemptible, is not peculiar to Aliger. They whose activity of imagination is often shifting the scenes of expectation, are frequently subject to such sallies of caprice as make all their actions fortuitous, destroy the value of their friendship, obstruct the efficacy of their virtues, and set them below the meanest of those that persist in their resolutions, execute what they design, and perform what they have promised.

CONTEMPLATION OF THE FUTURE THE CHIEF SOURCE OF HAPPINESS.

“ Come soon or late, death’s undetermined day,
This mortal being only can decay.”

OVID.—WELSTED’s *Trans.*

IT seems to be the fate of man to seek all his consolations in futurity. The time present is seldom able to fill desire or imagination with immediate enjoyment, and we are forced to supply its deficiencies by recollection or anticipation.

Every one has so often detected the fallaciousness of hope, and the inconvenience of teaching himself to expect what a thousand accidents may preclude, that, when time has abated the confidence with which youth rushes out to take possession of the world, we endeavour or wish to find entertainment in the review of life, and to repose upon real facts and certain experience. This is, perhaps, one reason among many why age delights in narratives.

But, so full is the world of calamity, that every source of pleasure is polluted, and every retirement of tranquillity disturbed. When time has supplied us with events sufficient to employ our thoughts, it has mingled them with so many disasters, that we shrink from their remembrance, dread their intrusion upon our minds, and fly from them as from enemies that pursue us with torture.

No man past the middle point of life can sit down to feast upon the pleasures of youth without finding the banquet imbibited by the cup of sorrow; he may revive lucky accidents and pleasing extravagances; many days of harmless frolic, or nights of honest festivity will perhaps recur; or, if he has been engaged in scenes of action, and acquainted with affairs of difficulty and vicissitudes of fortune, he may enjoy the nobler pleasure of looking back upon distress firmly supported, dangers resolutely encountered, and opposition artfully defeated. *Eneas* properly comforts his companions when, after the horrors of a storm, they have landed on an unknown and desolate country, with the hope that their miseries will be at some distant time recounted with delight. There are few higher gratifications than that of reflection on surmounted evils, when they were not incurred nor protracted by our fault, and reproach us with neither cowardice nor guilt.

But this felicity is almost always abated by the reflection, that they with whom we should be most pleased to share it are now in the grave. A few years make such havoc in human generations, that we soon see ourselves deprived of those with whom we entered the world, and whom the participation of pleasures or fatigues had endeared to our remembrance. The man of enterprise recounts his adventures and expedients, but is forced, at the close of the relation, to pay a sigh to the names of those that contributed to his success; he that

passes his life among the gayer part of mankind, has his remembrance stored with remarks and repartees of wits, whose sprightliness and merriment are now lost in perpetual silence ; the trader, whose industry has supplied the want of inheritance, repines in solitary plenty at the absence of companions with whom he had planned out amusements for his latter years ; and the scholar, whose merit, after a long series of efforts, raises him from obscurity, looks round in vain from his exaltation for his old friends or enemies, whose applause or mortification would heighten his triumph.

Among Martial's requisites to happiness is an estate not gained by industry, but left by inheritance. It is necessary to the completion of every good that it be timely obtained for whatever comes at the close of life will come too late to give much delight. Yet all human happiness has its defects ; of what we do gain for ourselves we have only a faint and imperfect fruition, because we cannot compare the difference between want and possession, or, at least, can derive from it no conviction of our own abilities, nor any increase of self-esteem. What we acquire by bravery or science, by mental or corporeal diligence, comes at last when we cannot communicate, and, therefore, cannot enjoy it.

Thus every period of life is obliged to borrow its happiness from the time to come. In youth we have nothing past to entertain us, and in age we derive little from retrospect but hopeless sorrow. Yet the future likewise has its limits, which the imagination dreads to approach, but which we see to be not far distant. The loss of our friends and companions impresses hourly upon us the necessity of our own departure ; we know that the schemes of man are quickly at an end ; that we must soon lie down in the grave with forgotten multitudes of former ages, and yield our place to others, who, like us, shall be driven a while by hope or fear about

the surface of the earth, and then, like us, be lost in the shades of death.

Beyond this termination of our material existence we are therefore obliged to extend our hopes; and almost every man indulges his imagination with something which is not to happen till he has changed his manner of being; some amuse themselves with entails and settlements, provide for the perpetuation of families and honours, or contrive to obviate the dissipation of the fortunes which it has been their business to accumulate; others, more refined or exalted, congratulate their own hearts upon the future extent of their reputation, the reverence of distant nations, and the gratitude of unprejudiced posterity.

They whose souls are so chained down to coffers and tenements that they cannot conceive a state in which they shall look upon them with less solicitude, are seldom attentive or flexible to arguments; but the votaries of fame are capable of reflection, and, therefore, may be called to reconsider the probability of their expectations.

Whether to be remembered in remote times be worthy of a wise man's wish, has not yet been satisfactorily decided; and, indeed, to be long remembered can happen to so small a number, that the bulk of mankind has very little interest in the question. There is never room in the world for more than a certain quantity or measure of renown. The necessary business of life, the immediate pleasures or pains of every condition, leave us not leisure beyond a fixed portion for contemplations which do not forcibly influence our present welfare. When this vacuity is filled, no characters can be admitted into the circulation of fame, but by occupying the place of some that must be thrust into oblivion. The eye of the mind, like that of the body, can only extend its views to new objects by losing sight of those which are now before it.

Reputation is therefore a meteor, which blazes a while and disappears for ever; and, if we except a few transcendent and invincible names, which no revolutions of opinion or length of time is able to suppress, all those that engage our thoughts or diversify our conversation are every moment hastening to obscurity, as new favourites are adopted by fashion.

It is not, therefore, from this world that any ray of comfort can proceed to cheer the gloom of the last hour. But futurity has still its prospects; there is yet happiness in reserve, which, if we transfer our attention to it, will support us in the pains of disease and the languor of decay. This happiness we may expect with confidence, because it is out of the power of chance, and may be attained by all that sincerely desire and earnestly pursue it. On this, therefore, every mind ought finally to rest. Hope is the chief blessing of man, and that hope only is rational of which we are certain that it cannot deceive us.

STORY OF SEGED, PRINCE OF ETHIOPIA.

“Of Heaven’s protection who can be
So confident to utter this?
To-morrow I will spend in bliss.”

SENECA.—F. LEWIS’S *Trans.*

SEGED, Lord of Ethiopia, to the inhabitants of the world: to the sons of *presumption*, humility, and fear; and to the daughters of *sorrow*, content, and *acquiescence*.

Thus, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, spoke Seged, the monarch of forty nations, the *distributor* of the waters of the Nile: “At length,

Seged, thy toils are at an end ; thou hast reconciled disaffection, thou hast suppressed rebellion, thou hast pacified the jealousies of thy courtiers, thou hast chased war from thy confines, and erected fortresses in the lands of thy enemies. All who have offended thee tremble in thy presence, and wherever thy voice is heard it is obeyed. Thy throne is surrounded by armies, numerous as the locusts of the summer, and resistless, as the blasts of pestilence. Thy magazines are stored with ammunition, thy treasuries overflow with the tribute of conquered kingdoms. Plenty waves upon thy fields, and opulence glitters in thy cities. Thy nod is as the earthquake that shakes the mountains, and thy smile as the dawn of the vernal day. In thy hand is the strength of thousands, and thy health is the health of millions. Thy palace is gladdened by the song of praise, and thy path perfumed by the breath of benediction. Thy subjects gaze upon thy greatness, and think of danger or misery no more. Why, Seged, wilt not thou partake the blessings thou bestowest ? Why shouldst thou only forbear to rejoice in this general felicity ? Why should thy face be clouded with anxiety, when the meanest of those who call thee sovereign gives the day to festivity and the night to peace ? At length, Seged, reflect and be wise. What is the gift of conquest but safety ? Why are riches collected but to purchase happiness ?"

Seged then ordered the house of pleasure, built on an island of the Lake of Dambea, to be prepared for his reception. "I will retire," says he, "for ten days from tumult and care, from councils and decrees. Long quiet is not the lot of the governors of nations, but a cessation of ten days cannot be denied me. This short interval of happiness may surely be secured from the interruption of fear or perplexity, sorrow or disappointment. I will exclude all trouble from my abode, and remove from

my thoughts whatever may confuse the harmony of the concert or abate the sweetness of the banquet. I will fill the whole capacity of my soul with enjoyment, and try what it is to live without a wish ungratified."

In a few days the orders were performed, and Seged hastened to the palace of Dambea, which stood in an island cultivated only for pleasure, planted with every flower that spreads its colours to the sun, and every shrub that sheds fragrance in the air. In one part of this extensive garden were open walks for excursions in the morning; in another, thick groves, and silent arbours, and bubbling fountains, for repose at noon. All that could solace the sense or flatter the fancy; all that industry could extort from nature or wealth furnish to art; all that conquest could seize or beneficence attract, was collected together, and every perception of delight was excited and gratified.

Into this delicious region Seged summoned all the persons of his court who seemed eminently qualified to receive or communicate pleasure. His call was readily obeyed; the young, the fair, the vivacious, and the witty, were all in haste to be sated with felicity. They sailed jocund over the lake, which seemed to smooth its surface before them; their passage was cheered with music, and their hearts dilated with expectation.

Seged, landing here with his band of pleasure, determined from that hour to break off all acquaintance with discontent, to give his heart for ten days to ease and jollity, and then fall back to the common state of man, and suffer his life to be diversified, as before, with joy and sorrow.

He immediately entered his chamber, to consider where he should begin his circle of happiness. He had all the artists of delight before him, but knew not whom to call, since he could not enjoy one but by delaying the performance of another. He chose

and rejected, he resolved and changed his resolution, till his faculties were harassed and his thoughts confused : then returned to the apartment where his presence was expected, with languid eyes and clouded countenance, and spread the infection of uneasiness over the whole assembly. He observed their depression, and was offended ; for he found his vexation increased by those whom he expected to dissipate and relieve it. He retired again to his private chamber, and sought for consolation in his own mind ; one thought flowed in upon another, a long succession of images seized his attention, the moments crept imperceptibly away through the gloom of pensiveness, till, having recovered his tranquillity, he lifted up his head, and saw the lake brightened by the setting sun. "Such," said Seged, sighing, "is the longest day of human existence : before we have learned to use it, we find it at an end."

The regret which he felt for the loss of so great a part of his first day, took from him all disposition to enjoy the evening ; and, after having endeavoured, for the sake of his attendants, to force an air of gayety, and excite that mirth which he could not share, he resolved to defer his hopes to the next morning, and lay down to partake with the slaves of labour and poverty the blessing of sleep.

He rose early the second morning, and resolved now to be happy. He therefore fixed upon the gate of the palace an edict, importing, that whoever, during nine days, should appear in the presence of the king with dejected countenance, or utter any expression of discontent or sorrow, should be driven for ever from the palace of Dambea.

This edict was immediately made known in every chamber of the court and bower of the gardens. Mirth was frightened away ; and they who were before dancing in the lawns or singing in the shades, were at once engaged in the care of regulating their looks, that Seged might find his will punctual-

ly obeyed, and see none among them liable to banishment.

Seged now met every face settled in a smile ; but a smile that betrayed solicitude, timidity, and constraint. He accosted his favourites with familiarity and softness ; but they durst not speak without pre-meditation, lest they should be convicted of discontent or sorrow. He proposed diversions, to which no objection was made, because objection would have implied uneasiness ; but they were regarded with indifference by the courtiers, who had no other desire than to signalize themselves by clamorous exultation. He offered various topics of conversation, but obtained only forced jests and laborious laughter ; and, after many attempts to animate his train to confidence and alacrity, was obliged to confess to himself the impotence of command, and resign another day to grief and disappointment.

He at last relieved his companions from their terrors, and shut himself up in his chamber to ascertain, by different measures, the felicity of the succeeding days. At length he threw himself on the bed and closed his eyes, but imagined in his sleep that his palace and gardens were overwhelmed by an inundation, and waked with all the terrors of a man struggling in the water. He composed himself again to rest, but was affrighted by an imaginary irruption into his kingdom ; and striving, as is usual in dreams, without ability to move, fancied himself betrayed to his enemies, and again started up with horror and indignation.

It was now day, and fear was so strongly impressed on his mind that he could sleep no more. He rose, but his thoughts were filled with the deluge and invasion ; nor was he able to disengage his attention, or mingle with vacancy and ease in any amusement. At length his perturbation gave way to reason, and he resolved no longer to be harassed by visionary miseries ; but, before this resolution

could be completed, half the day had elapsed. He felt a new conviction of the uncertainty of human schemes, and could not forbear to bewail the weakness of that being whose quiet was to be interrupted by vapours of the fancy. Having been first disturbed by a dream, he afterward grieved that a dream could disturb him. He at last discovered that his terrors and grief were equally vain, and that to lose the present in lamenting the past was voluntarily to protract a melancholy vision. The third day was now declining, and Seged again resolved to be happy on the morrow.

On the fourth morning Seged rose early, refreshed with sleep, vigorous with health, and eager with expectation. He entered the garden, attended by the princess and ladies of his court, and, seeing nothing about but airy cheerfulness, began to say to his heart, "This day shall be a day of pleasure." The sun played upon the water, the birds warbled in the groves, and the gales quivered among the branches. He roved from walk to walk as chance directed him, and sometimes listened to the songs, sometimes mingled with the dancers, sometimes let loose his imagination in flights of merriment, and sometimes uttered grave reflections and sententious maxims, and feasted on the admiration with which they were received.

Thus the day rolled on, without any accident of vexation or intrusion of melancholy thoughts. All that beheld him caught gladness from his looks, and the sight of happiness conferred by himself filled his heart with satisfaction: but, having passed three hours in this harmless luxury, he was alarmed on a sudden by a universal scream among the women, and, turning back, saw the whole assembly flying in confusion. A young crocodile had risen out of the lake, and was ranging the garden in wantonness or hunger. Seged beheld him with indignation as a disturber of his felicity, and chased him back into

the lake, but could not persuade his retinue to stay, or free their hearts from the terror which had seized upon them. The princesses enclosed themselves in the palace, and could yet scarcely believe themselves in safety. Every attention was fixed upon the late danger and escape, and no mind was any longer at leisure for gay sallies or careless prattle.

Seged had now no other employment than to contemplate the innumerable casualties which lie in ambush on every side to intercept the happiness of man, and break in upon the hour of delight and tranquillity. He had, however, the consolation of thinking, that he had not been now disappointed by his own fault, and that the accident which had blasted the hopes of the day might easily be prevented by future caution.

That he might provide for the pleasure of the next morning, he resolved to repeal his penal edict, since he had already found that discontent and melancholy were not to be frightened away by the threats of authority, and that pleasure would only reside where she was exempted from control. He therefore invited all the companions of his retreat to unbounded pleasantry, by proposing prizes for those who should, on the following day, distinguish themselves by any festive performances; the tables of the antechamber were covered with gold and pearls, and robes and garlands decreed the rewards of those who could refine elegance or heighten pleasure.

At this display of riches every eye immediately sparkled, and every tongue was busied in celebrating the bounty and magnificence of the emperor. But when Seged entered, in hopes of uncommon entertainment from universal emulation, he found that any passion too strongly agitated puts an end to that tranquillity which is necessary to mirth, and that the mind that is to be moved by the gentle *ventilations of gayety* must be first smoothed by a total *calm*. Whatever we ardently wish to gain, we

must, in the same degree, be afraid to lose, and fear and pleasure cannot dwell together.

All was now care and solicitude. Nothing was done or spoken but with so visible an endeavour at perfection as always failed to delight, though it sometimes forced admiration: and Seged could not but observe with sorrow, that his prizes had more influence than himself. As the evening approached the contest grew more earnest, and those who were forced to allow themselves excelled began to discover the malignity of defeat, first by angry glances, and at last by contemptuous murmurs. Seged likewise shared the anxiety of the day; for, considering himself as obliged to distribute with exact justice the prizes which had been so zealously sought, he durst never remit his attention, but passed his time upon the rack of doubt, in balancing different kinds of merit, and adjusting the claims of all the competitors.

At last, knowing that no exactness could satisfy those whose hopes he should disappoint, and thinking that, on a day set apart for happiness, it would be cruel to oppress any heart with sorrow, he declared that all had pleased him alike, and dismissed all with presents of equal value.

Seged soon saw that his caution had not been able to avoid offence. They who had believed themselves secure of the highest prizes were not pleased to be levelled with the crowd; and though, by the liberality of the king, they received more than his promise had entitled them to expect, they departed unsatisfied, because they were honoured with no distinction, and wanted an opportunity to triumph in the mortification of their opponents. "Behold here," said Seged, "the condition of him who places his happiness in the happiness of others." He then retired to meditate, and, while the courtiers were repining at his distributions, saw the fifth sun go down in discontent.

The next dawn renewed his resolution to be happy. But having learned how little he could effect by settled schemes or preparatory measures, he thought it best to give up one day entirely to chance, and left every one to please and be pleased his own way.

This relaxation of regularity diffused a general complacence through the whole court, and the emperor imagined that he had at last found the secret of obtaining an interval of felicity. But as he was roving in this careless assembly with equal carelessness, he overheard one of his courtiers in a close arbour murmuring alone : "What merit has Seged above us, that we should thus fear and obey him ? a man whom, whatever he may have formerly performed, his luxury now shows to have the same weakness with ourselves !" This charge affected him the more, as it was uttered by one whom he had always observed among the most abject of his flatterers. At first his indignation prompted him to severity ; but reflecting that what was spoken without intention to be heard was to be considered as only thought, and was, perhaps, but the sudden burst of casual and temporary vexation, he invented some decent pretence to send him away, that his retreat might not be tainted with the breath of envy ; and, after the struggle of deliberation was past, and all desire of revenge utterly suppressed, passed the evening not only with tranquillity, but triumph, though none but himself was conscious of the victory.

The remembrance of this clemency cheered the beginning of the seventh day, and nothing happened to disturb the pleasure of Seged, till, looking on the tree that shaded him, he recollects that under a tree of the same kind he had passed the night after his defeat in the kingdom of Goiama. The reflection on his loss, his dishonour, and the miseries which his subjects suffered from the invader, filled

him with sadness. At last he shook off the weight of sorrow, and began to solace himself with his usual pleasure; when his tranquillity was again disturbed by jealousies which the late contest for the prizes had produced, and which, having in vain tried to pacify them by persuasion, he was forced to silence by command.

On the eighth morning Seged was awakened early by an unusual hurry in the apartments, and, inquiring the cause, was told that the Princess Balkis was seized with sickness. He rose, and, calling the physicians, found that they had little hope of her recovery. Here was an end of jollity; all his thoughts were now upon his daughter, whose eyes he closed on the tenth day.

Such were the days which Seged of Ethiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter may presume to say, "This day shall be a day of happiness."

ON FALSEHOOD.

"The wretch that often has deceived,
Though truth he speaks, is ne'er believed."

PHÆDRUS.

WHEN Aristotle was once asked what a man could gain by uttering falsehoods, he replied, "Not to be credited when he shall tell the truth."

The character of a liar is at once so hateful and contemptible, that even of those who have lost their virtue, it might be expected that from the violation of truth they should be restrained by their pride.

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Almost every other vice that disgraces human nature may be kept in countenance by applause and association; the drunkard may easily unite with beings, devoted, like himself, to noisy merriments or silent insensibility, who will celebrate his victories over the novices of intemperance, boast themselves the companions of his prowess, and tell with rapture of the multitudes whom unsuccessful emulation has hurried to the grave; even the robber and the cutthroat have their followers, who admire their address and intrepidity, their stratagems of rapine, and their fidelity to the gang.

The liar, and only the liar, is invariably and universally despised, abandoned, and disowned; he has no domestic consolations which he can oppose to the censure of mankind; he can retire to no fraternity where his crimes may stand in place of virtues; but is given up to the hisses of the multitude, without friend and without apologist. It is the peculiar condition of falsehood to be equally detested by the good and bad: "The devils," says Sir Thomas Brown, "do not tell lies to one another; for truth is necessary to all societies: nor can the society of hell subsist without it."

It is natural to expect, that a crime thus generally detested should be generally avoided; at least that none should expose himself to unabated and unpitied infamy without an adequate temptation; and that to guilt so easily detected and so severely punished, an adequate temptation would not readily be found.

Yet so it is, in defiance of censure and contempt, truth is frequently violated; and scarcely the most vigilant and unremitting circumspection will secure him that mixes with mankind from being hourly deceived by men, of whom it can scarcely be imagined that they mean any injury to him or profit to themselves; even where the subject of conversation could not have been expected to put the pas-

sions in motion, or to have excited either hope or fear, or zeal or malignity, sufficient to induce any man to put his reputation in hazard, however little he might value it, or to overpower the love of truth, however weak might be its influence.

The casuists have very diligently distinguished lies into their several classes, according to their various degrees of malignity; but they have, I think, generally omitted that which is most common, and, perhaps, not least mischievous: which, since the moralists have not given it a name, I shall distinguish as the *lie of vanity*.

To vanity may justly be imputed most of the falsehoods which every man hears hourly playing upon his ear, and, perhaps, most of those that are propagated with success. To the lie of commerce and the lie of malice, the motive is so apparent, that they are seldom negligently or implicitly received; suspicion is always watchful over the practices of interest; and whatever the hope of gain or desire of mischief can prompt one man to assert, another is, by reasons equally cogent, incited to refute. But vanity pleases herself with such slight gratifications, and looks forward to pleasure so remotely consequential, that her practices raise no alarm, and her stratagems are not easily discovered.

Vanity is, indeed, often suffered to pass unpursued by suspicion, because he that would watch her motions can never be at rest; fraud and malice are bounded in their influence; some opportunity of time and place is necessary to their agency; but scarce any man is abstracted one moment from his vanity; and he to whom truth affords no gratifications, is generally inclined to seek them in falsehoods.

It is remarked by Sir Kenelm Digby, "That every man has a desire to appear superior to others, though it were only in having seen what they have

not seen." Such an accidental advantage, since it neither implies merit nor confers dignity, one would think should not be desired so much as to be counterfeited ; yet even this vanity, trifling as it is, produces innumerable narratives, all equally false, but more or less credible in proportion to the skill or confidence of the relater. How many may a man of diffusive conversation count among his acquaintances, whose lives have been signalized by numberless escapes ; who never cross the river but in a storm, or take a journey in the country without more adventures than befell the knights-errant of ancient times in pathless forests or enchanted castles ! How many must he know to whom portents and prodigies are of daily occurrence, and for whom nature is hourly working wonders invisible to every other eye, only to supply them with subjects of conversation ?

Others there are that amuse themselves with the dissemination of falsehood, at greater hazard of detection and disgrace ; men marked out by some lucky planet for universal confidence and friendship, who have been consulted in every difficulty, intrusted with every secret, and summoned to every transaction ; it is the supreme felicity of these men to stun all companies with noisy information ; to still doubt and overbear opposition with certain knowledge or authentic intelligence. A liar of this kind, with a strong memory or brisk imagination, is often the oracle of an obscure club, and, till time discovers his impostures, dictates to his hearers with uncontrolled authority ; for, if a public question be started, he was present at the debate ; if a new fashion be mentioned, he was at court the first day of its appearance ; if a new performance of literature draws the attention of the public, he has patronised the author, and seen his work in manuscript ; if a criminal of eminence be condemned to die, he often predicted his fate, and endeavoured his refor-

tion: and who that lives at a distance from the scene of action will dare to contradict a man who reports from his own eyes and ears, and to whom all persons and affairs are thus intimately known?

This kind of falsehood is generally successful for a time, because it is practised at first with timidity and caution; but the prosperity of the liar is of short duration; the reception of one story is always an incitement to the forgery of another less probable; and he goes on to triumph over tacit credulity, till pride or reason rise up against him, and his companions will no longer endure to see him wiser than themselves.

It is apparent that the inventors of all these fictions intend some exaltation of themselves, and are led off by their pursuit of honour from their attendance upon truth: their narratives always imply some consequence in favour of their courage, their sagacity, or their activity, their familiarity with the learned, or their reception among the great; they are always bribed by the present pleasure of seeing themselves superior to those that surround them, and receiving the homage of silent attention and envious admiration.

But vanity is sometimes excited to fiction by less visible gratifications; the present age abounds with a race of liars who are content with the consciousness of falsehood, and whose pride is to deceive others without any gain or glory to themselves. Of this tribe it is the supreme pleasure to remark a lady in the playhouse or the park, and to publish, under the character of a man suddenly enamoured, an advertisement in the news of the next day, containing a minute description of her person and her dress. From this artifice, however, no other effect can be expected than perturbations which the writer can never see, and conjectures of which he can never be informed; some mischief, however, he hopes he has done; and to have done

mischievous is of some importance. He sets his invention to work again, and produces a narrative of a robbery or a murder, with all the circumstances of time and place accurately adjusted. This is a jest of greater effect and longer duration: if he fixes his scene at a proper distance, he may for several days keep a wife in terror for her husband, or a mother for her son; and please himself with reflecting, that by his abilities and address some addition is made to the miseries of life.

There is, I think, an ancient law of Scotland, by which *leasing-making* was capitally punished. I am, indeed, far from desiring to increase in this kingdom the number of executions; yet I cannot but think that they who destroy the confidence of society, weaken the credit of intelligence, and interrupt the security of life; harass the delicate with shame, and perplex the timorous with alarms, might very properly be awakened to a sense of their crimes by denunciations of a whipping-post or pillory: since many are so insensible of right and wrong that they have no standard of action but the law, nor feel guilt but as they dread punishment.

FOLLY OF INDULGING EXTRAVAGANT HOPES.

“Men willingly believe what they wish to be true.”

TULLY has long ago observed, that no man, however weakened by long life, is so conscious of his own decrepitude as not to imagine that he may yet hold his station in the world for another year.

Of the truth of this remark every day furnishes new confirmation; there is no time of life in which

men, for the most part, seem less to expect the stroke of death, than when every other eye sees it impending ; or are more busy in providing for another year, when it is plain to all but themselves that at another year they cannot arrive. Though every funeral that passes before their eyes evinces the deceitfulness of such expectations, since every man who is borne to the grave thought himself equally certain of living at least another year, the survivor still continues to flatter himself, and is never at a loss for some reason why his life should be protracted, and the voracity of death continue to be pacified with some other prey.

But this is only one of the innumerable artifices practised in the universal conspiracy of mankind against themselves ; every age and every condition indulges some darling fallacy ; every man amuses himself with projects which he knows to be improbable, and which, therefore, he resolves to pursue without daring to examine them. Whatever any man ardently desires, he very readily believes that he shall some time attain : he whose intemperance has overwhelmed him with diseases, while he languishes in the spring, expects vigour and recovery from the summer sun ; and while he melts away in the summer, transfers his hopes to the frosts of winter : he that gazes upon elegance or pleasure, which want of money hinders him from imitating or partaking, comforts himself that the time of distress will soon be at an end, and that every day brings him nearer to a state of happiness ; though he knows it has passed not only without acquisition of advantage, but perhaps without endeavours after it, in the formation of schemes that cannot be executed, and in the contemplation of prospects which cannot be approached.

Such is the general dream in which we all slumber out our time : every man thinks the day coming in which he shall be gratified with all his wishes ;

in which he shall leave all those competitors behind who are now rejoicing, like himself, in the expectation of victory; the day is always coming to the servile in which they shall be powerful; to the obscure in which they shall be eminent; and to the deformed in which they shall be beautiful.

If any of my readers has looked with so little attention on the world about him as to imagine this representation exaggerated beyond probability, let him reflect a little upon his own life; let him consider what were his hopes and prospects ten years ago, and what additions he then expected to be made by ten years to his happiness: those years have now elapsed; have they made good the promise that was extorted from them? have they advanced his fortune, enlarged his knowledge, or reformed his conduct to the degree that was once expected? I am afraid every man that recollects his hopes must confess his disappointment; and own that day has glided unprofitably after day, and that he is still at the same distance from the point of happiness.

With what consolations can those who have thus miscarried in their chief design, elude the memory of their ill success? with what amusements can they pacify their discontent, after the loss of so large a portion of life? They can give themselves up again to the same delusions; they can form new schemes of airy gratifications, and fix another period of felicity; they can again resolve to trust the promise which they know will be broken; they can walk in a circle with their eyes shut, and persuade themselves to think that they go forward.

Of every great and complicated event, part depends upon causes out of our power, and part must be effected by vigour and perseverance. With regard to that which is styled in common language *the work of chance*, men will always find reasons for confidence or distrust, according to their different tempers or inclinations; and he that has been

long accustomed to please himself with possibilities of fortuitous happiness, will not easily or willingly be reclaimed from his mistake. But the effects of human industry and skill are more easily subjected to calculation; whatever can be completed in a year is divisible into parts, of which each can be performed in the compass of a day; he, therefore, that has passed the day without attention to the task assigned him, may be certain that the lapse of life has brought him no nearer to his object; for whatever idleness may expect from time, its produce will only be in proportion to the diligence with which it has been used. He that floats lazily down the stream, in pursuit of something borne along by the same current, will find himself, indeed, move forward; but, unless he lays his hand to the oar, and increases his speed by his own labour, must be always at the same distance from that which he is following.

There have happened in every age some contingencies of unexpected and undeserved success, by which those who are determined to believe whatever favours their inclinations, have been encouraged to delight themselves with future advantages; they support confidence by considerations, of which the only proper use is to chase away despair; it is equally absurd to sit down in idleness because some have been enriched without labour, as to leap a precipice because some have fallen and escaped with life, or to put to sea in a storm because some have been driven from a wreck upon the coast to which they were bound.

We are all ready to confess that belief ought to be proportioned to evidence or probability; let any man, therefore, compare the number of those who have been thus favoured by fortune and of those who have failed of their expectations, and he will easily determine with what justness he has registered himself in the lucky catalogue.

But there is no need on these occasions for deep inquiries or laborious calculations: there is a far easier method of distinguishing the hopes of folly from those of reason, of finding the difference between prospects that exist before the eyes, and those that are only painted on a fond imagination. Tom Drowsy had accustomed himself to compute the profit of a darling project till he had no longer any doubt of its success: it was at last matured by close consideration, and all the measures were accurately adjusted, and he wanted only five hundred pounds to become master of a fortune that might be envied by a director of a trading company. Tom was generous and grateful, and was resolved to recompense this small assistance with an ample fortune: he therefore deliberated for a time to whom among his friends he should declare his necessities; not that he suspected a refusal, but because he could not suddenly determine which of them would make the best use of riches, and was, therefore, most worthy of his favour. At last his choice was settled; and knowing that, in order to borrow, he must show the probability of repayment, he prepared for a minute and copious explanation of his project. But here the golden dream was at an end: he soon discovered the impossibility of imposing upon others the notions by which he had so long imposed upon himself; which way soever he turned his thoughts, impossibility and absurdity arose in opposition on every side; even credulity and prejudice were at last forced to give way, and he grew ashamed of crediting himself what shame would not suffer him to communicate to another.

'To this test let every man bring his imaginations before they have been too long predominant in his mind. Whatever is true will bear to be related, *whatever is rational will endure to be explained; ut when we delight to brood in secret over future happiness, and silently to employ our meditations*

long accustomed to please himself with possibilities of fortuitous happiness, will not easily or willingly be reclaimed from his mistake. But the effects of human industry and skill are more easily subjected to calculation; whatever can be completed in a year is divisible into parts, of which each can be performed in the compass of a day; he, therefore, that has passed the day without attention to the task assigned him, may be certain that the lapse of life has brought him no nearer to his object; for whatever idleness may expect from time, its produce will only be in proportion to the diligence with which it has been used. He that floats lazily down the stream, in pursuit of something borne along by the same current, will find himself, indeed, move forward; but, unless he lays his hand to the oar, and increases his speed by his own labour, must be always at the same distance from that which he is following.

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self, and to expect from a vigorous exertion of his powers more than spirit or diligence can attain; between him and his wish he sees obstacles indeed, but he expects to overleap or break them; his mistaken ardour hurries him forward; and though, perhaps, he misses his end, he nevertheless obtains some collateral good, and performs something useful to mankind and honourable to himself.

The drone of timidity presumes likewise to hope, but without ground and without consequence; the bliss with which he solaces his hours, he always expects from others, though very often he knows not from whom: he folds his arms about him, and sits in expectation of some revolution in the state that shall raise him to greatness, or some golden shower that shall load him with wealth; he dozes away the day in musing upon the morrow, and at the end of life is roused from his dream only to discover that the time of action is past, and that he can now show his wisdom only by repentance.

WE SHOULD HAVE A BECOMING CONFIDENCE IN OUR OWN POWERS.

“Avaunt, despair.”

I HAVE sometimes heard it disputed in conversation, whether it be more laudable or desirable, that a man should think too highly or too meanly of himself; it is on all hands agreed to be best, that he should think rightly; but since a fallible being will always make some deviations from exact rectitude, it is not wholly useless to inquire towards which side it is safer to decline.

The prejudices of mankind seem to favour him.

who errs by underrating his own powers; he is considered as a modest and harmless member of society, not likely to break the peace by competition, to endeavour after such splendour of reputation as may dim the lustre of others, or to interrupt any in the enjoyment of themselves; he is no man's rival, and, therefore, may be every man's friend.

The opinion which a man entertains of himself ought to be distinguished, in order to an accurate discussion of this question as it relates to persons or to things. To think highly of ourselves in comparison with others, to assume by our own authority that precedence which none is willing to grant, must be always invidious and offensive; but to rate our powers high in proportion to things, and imagine ourselves equal to great undertakings, while we leave others in possession of the same abilities, cannot with equal justice provoke censure.

It must be confessed, that self-love may dispose us to decide too hastily in our own favour: but who is hurt by the mistake? If we are incited by this vain opinion to attempt more than we can perform, ours is the labour and ours is the disgrace.

But he that dares to think well of himself will not always prove to be mistaken; and the good effects of his confidence will then appear in great attempts and great performances: if he should not fully complete his design, he will at least advance it so far as to leave an easier task for him that succeeds him; and, even though he should wholly fail, he will fail with honour.

But from the opposite error, from torpid despondency, can come no advantage; it is the frost of the soul, which binds up all its powers, and congeals life in perpetual sterility. He that has no hopes of success will make no attempts; and where nothing is attempted, nothing can be done.

Every man should therefore endeavour to main-

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tain in himself a favourable opinion of the powers of the human mind; which are, perhaps, in every man, greater than they appear, and might, by diligent cultivation, be exalted to a degree beyond what their possessor presumes to believe. There is scarce any man but has found himself able, at the instigation of necessity, to do what, in a state of leisure and deliberation, he would have concluded impossible; and some of our species have signalized themselves by such achievements as prove that there are few things above human hope.

It has been the policy of all nations to preserve by some public monuments the memory of those who have served their country by great exploits; there is the same reason for continuing or reviving the name of those whose extensive abilities have dignified humanity. An honest emulation may be alike excited; and the philosopher's curiosity may be inflamed by a catalogue of the works of Boyle or Bacon, as Themistocles was kept awake by the trophies of Miltiades.

Among the favourites of nature that have from time to time appeared in the world, enriched with various endowments and contrarieties of excellence, none seems to have been more exalted above the common rate of humanity than the man known about two centuries ago by the appellation of the Admirable Crichton; of whose history, whatever we may suppress as surpassing credibility, yet we shall, upon incontestable authority, relate enough to rank him among prodigies.

"Virtue," says Virgil, "is better accepted when it comes in a pleasing form:" the person of Crichton was eminently beautiful; but his beauty was consistent with such activity and strength, that, in fencing, he would spring at one bound the length of twenty feet upon his antagonist; and he used the sword in either hand with such force and dexterity, that scarce any one had courage to engage him.

Having studied at St. Andrew's in Scotland, he went to Paris in his twenty-first year, and affixed on the gate of the College of Navarre a kind of challenge to the learned of that university to dispute with him on a certain day: offering to his opponents, whoever they should be, the choice of ten languages, and of all the faculties and sciences. On the day appointed three thousand auditors assembled, when four doctors of the church and fifty masters appeared against him; and one of his antagonists confesses that the doctors were defeated; that he gave proofs of knowledge above the reach of man; and that a hundred years, passed without food or sleep, would not be sufficient for the attainment of his learning. After a disputation of nine hours, he was presented by the president and professors with a diamond and a purse of gold, and dismissed with repeated acclamations.

From Paris he went away to Rome, where he made the same challenge, and had, in the presence of the pope and cardinals, the same success. Afterward he contracted at Venice an acquaintance with Aldus Manutius, by whom he was introduced to the learned of that city: then visited Padua, where he engaged in another public disputation, beginning his performance with an extemporal poem in praise of the city and assembly then present, and concluding with an oration equally unpremeditated in commendation of ignorance.

He afterward published another challenge, in which he declared himself ready to detect the errors of Aristotle and all his commentators, either in the common forms of logic, or in any which his antagonists should propose of a hundred different kinds of verse.

These acquisitions of learning, however stupendous, were not gained at the expense of any pleasure which youth generally indulges, or by the omission of any accomplishment in which it be-

comes a gentleman to excel. He practised in great perfection the arts of drawing and painting, he was an eminent performer in both vocal and instrumental music, he danced with uncommon gracefulness, and, on the day after his disputation at Paris, exhibited his skill in horsemanship before the court of France, where, at a public match of tilting, he bore away the ring upon his lance fifteen times together.

He excelled likewise in domestic games of less dignity and reputation: and, in the interval between his challenge and disputation at Paris, he spent so much of his time at cards, dice, and tennis, that a lampoon was fixed upon the gate of the Sorbonne, directing those that would see this monster of erudition to look for him at the tavern.

So extensive was his acquaintance with life and manners, that in an Italian comedy composed by himself and exhibited before the court of Mantua, he is said to have personated fifteen different characters: in all of which he might succeed without great difficulty, since he had such power of retention, that, once hearing an oration of an hour, he would repeat it exactly, and in the recital follow the speaker through all his variety of tone and gesticulation.

Nor was his skill in arms less than in learning, or his courage inferior to his skill: there was a prize-fighter at Mantua, who, travelling about the world, according to the barbarous custom of that age, as a general challenger, had defeated the most celebrated masters in many parts of Europe; and in Mantua, where he then resided, had killed three that appeared against him. The duke repented that he had granted him his protection; when Crichton looking on his sanguinary success with indignation, offered to stake fifteen hundred pistoles, and mount the stage against him. The duke, with some reluctance, consented, and, on the

day fixed, the combatants appeared: their weapon seems to have been single rapier; which was then newly introduced in Italy. The prize-fighter advanced with great violence and fierceness, and Crichton contented himself calmly to ward his passes, and suffered him to exhaust his vigour by his own fury. Crichton then became the assailant, and pressed upon him with such force and agility, that he thrust him thrice through the body and saw him expire; he then divided the prize he had won among the widows whose husbands had been killed.

The death of this wonderful man I should be willing to conceal, did I not know that every reader will inquire curiously after that fatal hour, which is common to all human beings, however distinguished from each other by nature or by fortune.

The Duke of Mantua, having received so many proofs of his merit, made him tutor to his son Vicentio di Gozaga, a prince of loose manners and turbulent disposition. On this occasion it was that he composed the comedy in which he exhibited so many different characters with exact propriety. But his honour was of short continuance: for as he was one night, in the time of Carnival, rambling about the streets with his guitar in his hand, he was attacked by six men masked. Neither his courage nor skill in this exigence deserted him: he opposed them with such activity and spirit that he soon dispersed them, and disarmed their leader, who, throwing off his mask, discovered himself to be the prince his pupil. Crichton, falling on his knees, took his own sword by the point and presented it to the prince; who immediately seized it, and instigated, as some say, by jealousy, according to others only by drunken fury and brutal resentment, thrust him through the heart.

Thus was the Admirable Crichton brought into that state in which he could excel the meanest of mankind only by a few empty honours paid to his

memory: the court of Mantua testified their esteem by a public mourning, the contemporary wits were profuse of their encomiums, and the palaces of Italy were adorned with pictures, representing him on horseback, with a lance in one hand and a book in the other.

THE MERIT OF ACTIONS NOT TO BE JUDGED BY THEIR EVENT.

"But in the glorious enterprise he died."

OVID.—ADDISON'S *Trans.*

It has always been the practice of mankind to judge of actions by the event. The same attempts, conducted in the same manner, but terminated by different success, produce different judgments: they who attain their wishes never want celebrators of their wisdom and their virtue; and they that miscarry are quickly discovered to have been defective, not only in mental, but in moral qualities. The world will never be long without some good reason to hate the unhappy: their real faults are immediately detected; and, if those are not sufficient to sink them into infamy, an additional weight of calumny will be superadded: he that fails in his endeavours after wealth or power will not long retain either honesty or courage.

This species of injustice has so long prevailed in universal practice, that it seems likewise to have infected speculation: so few minds are able to separate the ideas of greatness and prosperity, that even Sir William Temple has determined, "that he who can deserve the name of a hero must not only be virtuous, but fortunate."

By this unreasonable distribution of praise and blame, none have suffered oftener than projectors, whose rapidity of imagination and vastness of design raise such envy in their fellow-mortals, that every eye watches for their fall, and every heart exults at their distresses: yet even a projector may gain favour by success; and the tongue that was prepared to hiss, then endeavours to excel others in loudness of applause.

When Coriolanus, in Shakspeare, deserted to Aufidius, the Volscian servants at first insulted him, even while he stood under the protection of the household gods: but when they saw that the project took effect, and the stranger was seated at the head of the table, one of them very judiciously observes, "that he always thought there was more in him than he could think."

Machiavel has justly animadverted on the different notice taken by all succeeding times of the two great projectors, Catiline and Cæsar. Both formed the same project, and intended to raise themselves to power by subverting the commonwealth: they pursued their design, perhaps, with equal abilities and with equal virtue; but Catiline perished in the field, and Cæsar returned from Pharsalia with unlimited authority: and from that time, every monarch of the earth has thought himself honoured by a comparison with Cæsar; and Catiline has been never mentioned but that his name might be applied to traitors and incendiaries.

In an age more remote, Xerxes projected the conquest of Greece, and brought down the power of Asia against it: but, after the world had been filled with expectation and terror, his army was beaten, his fleet was destroyed, and Xerxes has never been mentioned without contempt.

A few years afterward, Greece likewise had her turn of giving birth to a projector; who, invading Asia with a small army, went forth in search of ad-

ventures, and, by his escape from one danger, gained only more rashness to rush into another ; he stormed city after city, overran kingdom after kingdom, fought battles only for barren victory, and invaded nations only that he might make his way through them to new invasions ; but, having been fortunate in the execution of his projects, he died with the name of Alexander the Great.

These are, indeed, events of ancient times ; but human nature is always the same, and every age will afford us instances of public censures influenced by events. The great business of the middle centuries was the holy war ; which, undoubtedly, was a noble project, and was for a long time prosecuted with a spirit equal to that with which it had been contrived ; but the ardour of the European heroes only hurried them to destruction ; for a long time they could not gain the territories for which they fought, and, when at last gained, they could not keep them : their expeditions, therefore, have been the scoff of idleness and ignorance, their understanding and their virtue have been equally vilified, their conduct has been ridiculed, and their cause has been defamed.

When Columbus had engaged King Ferdinand in the discovery of the other hemisphere, the sailors with whom he embarked in the expedition had so little confidence in their commander, that, after having been long at sea, looking for coasts which they expected never to find, they raised a general mutiny, and demanded to return. He found means to sooth them into a permission to continue the same course three days longer, and on the evening of the third day descried land. Had the impatience of his crew denied him a few hours of the time requested, what had been his fate but to have come back with the infamy of a vain projector, who had betrayed the king's credulity to useless expenses, and risked his life in seeking countries that had no existence ?

How would those that had rejected his proposals have triumphed in their acuteness ! And when would his name have been mentioned, but with the makers of potable gold and malleable glass ?

The last royal projectors with whom the world has been troubled, were Charles of Sweden and the Czar of Muscovy. Charles, if any judgment may be formed of his designs by his measures and his inquiries, had purposed first to dethrone the Czar, then to lead his army through pathless deserts into China, thence to make his way by the sword through the whole circuit of Asia, and, by the conquest of Turkey, to unite Sweden with his new dominions : but this mighty project was crushed at Pultowa ; and Charles has since been considered as a madman by those powers who sent their ambassadors to solicit his friendship, and their generals "to learn under him the art of war."

The Czar found employment sufficient in his own dominions, and amused himself in digging canals and building cities ; murdering his subjects with insufferable fatigues, and transplanting nations from one corner of his dominions to another, without regretting the thousands that perished on the way : but he attained his end ; he made his people formidable, and is numbered by fame among the demigods.

I am far from intending to vindicate the sanguinary projects of heroes and conquerors, and would wish rather to diminish the reputation of their success than the infamy of their miscarriages : for I cannot conceive why he that has burned cities, wasted nations, and filled the world with horror and desolation, should be more kindly regarded by mankind than he who died in the rudiments of wickedness ; why he that accomplished wickedness should be glorious, and he that only endeavoured it should be criminal. I would wish Cæsar and Catiline, Xerxes and Alexander, Charles and Peter, huddled together in obscurity or detestation.

But there is another species of projectors to whom I would willingly conciliate mankind ; whose ends are generally laudable, and whose labours are innocent ; who are searching out new powers of nature, or contriving new works of art ; but who are yet persecuted with incessant obloquy, and whom the universal contempt with which they are treated oftens debars from that success which their industry would obtain if it were permitted to act without opposition.

They who find themselves inclined to censure new undertakings, only because they are new, should consider that the folly of projection is very seldom the folly of a fool ; it is commonly the ebullition of a capacious mind, crowded with variety of knowledge, and heated with intenseness of thought ; it proceeds often from the consciousness of uncommon powers ; from the confidence of those who, having already done much, are easily persuaded that they can do more. When Rowley had completed the orrery, he attempted the perpetual motion ; when Boyle had exhausted the secrets of vulgar chemistry, he turned his thoughts to the work of transmutation.

A projector generally unites those qualities which have the fairest claim to veneration : extent of knowledge, and greatness of design. Projectors of all kinds agree in their intellects, though they differ in their morals ; they all fail by attempting things beyond their power ; by despising vulgar attainments, and aspiring to performances to which, perhaps, nature has not proportioned the force of man ; when they fail, therefore, they fail not by idleness or timidity, but by rash adventure and fruitless diligence.

That the attempts of such men will often miscarry, we may reasonably expect ; yet from such men, and such only, are we to hope for the cultivation of those parts of nature which lie yet waste, and the

invention of those arts which are yet wanting to the felicity of life. If they are, therefore, universally discouraged, art and discovery can make no advances. Whatever is attempted without previous certainty of success may be considered as a project, and among narrow minds may, therefore, expose its author to censure and contempt; and if the liberty of laughing be once indulged, every man will laugh at what he does not understand; every project will be considered as madness, and every great or new design will be censured as a project. Men, unaccustomed to reason and researches, think every enterprise impracticable which is extended beyond common effects, or comprises many intermediate operations. Many that presume to laugh at projectors would consider a flight through the air in a winged chariot, and the movement of a mighty engine by the steam of water, as equally the dreams of mechanic lunacy; and would hear, with equal negligence, of the union of the Thames and the Severn by a canal, and the scheme of Albuquerque, the viceroy of the Indies, who, in the rage of hostility, had contrived to make Egypt a barren desert by turning the Nile into the Red Sea.

Those who have attempted much have seldom failed to perform more than those who never deviate from the common roads of action: many valuable preparations of chemistry are supposed to have risen from unsuccessful inquiries after the grand elixir; it is, therefore, just to encourage those who endeavour to enlarge the power of art, since they often succeed beyond expectation; and, when they fail, may sometimes benefit the world even by their miscarriages.

CAUSES WHICH PRODUCE DIVERSITY OF OPINION.

"And of their vain disputings find no end."

HOR.—FRANCIS's Thesis.

It has been sometimes asked by those who find the appearance of wisdom more easily attained by questions than solutions, how it comes to pass that the world is divided by such difference of opinion; and why men equally reasonable and equally lovers of truth, do not always think in the same manner.

With regard to simple propositions, where the terms are understood and the whole subject is comprehended at once, there is such a uniformity of sentiment among all human beings, that for many ages a very numerous set of notions were supposed to be innate, or necessarily co-existent with the faculty of reason; it being imagined that universal agreement could proceed only from the invariable dictates of the universal parent.

In questions diffuse and compounded, this similarity of determination is no longer to be expected. At our first sally into the intellectual world, we all march together along one straight and open road; but, as we proceed further, and wider prospects open to our view, every eye fixes upon a different scene; we divide into various paths, and, as we move forward, are still at a greater distance from each other. As a question becomes more complicated and involved, and extends to a greater number of relations, disagreement of opinion will always be multiplied; not because we are irrational, but because we are *finite beings*, furnished with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention; one discovering consequences which escape another,

none taking in the whole concatenation of causes and effects, and most comprehending but a very small part ; each comparing what he observes with a different criterion, and each referring it to a different purpose.

Where, then, is the wonder, that they who see only a small part should judge erroneously of the whole ? or that they who see different and dissimilar parts should judge differently from each other ?

Whatever has various respects must have various appearances of good and evil, beauty or deformity ; thus the gardener tears up as a weed the plant which the physician gathers as a medicine ; and "a general," says Sir Kenelm Digby, "will look with pleasure over a plain, as a fit place on which the fate of empires might be decided in battle, which the farmer will despise as bleak and barren, neither fruitful of pasturage nor fit for tillage."

Two men, examining the same question, proceed commonly like the physician and gardener in selecting herbs, or the farmer and hero looking on the plain ; they bring minds impressed with different notions, and direct their inquiries to different ends ; they form, therefore, contrary conclusions, and each wonders at the other's absurdity.

We have less reason to be surprised or offended when we find others differ from us in opinion, because we very often differ from ourselves. How often we alter our minds, we do not always remark ; because the change is sometimes made imperceptibly and gradually, and the last conviction effaces all memory of the former ; yet every man accustomed from time to time to take a survey of his own notions, will, by a slight retrospection, be able to discover that his mind has suffered many revolutions ; that the same things have, in the several parts of his life, been condemned and approved, pursued and shunned ; and that, on many occasions, even when his practice has been steady, his mind has been wa-

vering, and he has persisted in a scheme of action rather because he feared the censure of inconstancy than because he was always pleased with his own choice.

Of the different faces shown by the same objects as they are viewed on opposite sides, and of the different inclinations which they must constantly raise in him that contemplates them, a more striking example cannot easily be found than two Greek epigrammatists will afford us in their accounts of human life, which I shall lay before the reader in English prose.

Posidippus, a comic poet, utters this complaint: "Through which of the paths of life is it eligible to pass? In public assemblies are debates and troublesome affairs: domestic privacies are haunted with anxieties: in the country is labour, on the sea is terror: in a foreign land, he that has money must live in fear, he that wants it must pine in distress: are you married? you are troubled with suspicions; are you single? you languish in solitude: children occasion toil, and a childless life is a state of destitution: the time of youth is a time of folly, and gray hairs are loaded with infirmity. This choice only, therefore, can be made, either never to receive being, or immediately to lose it."

Such and so gloomy is the prospect which Posidippus has laid before us. But we are not to acquiesce too hastily in his determination against the value of existence: for Metrodorus, a philosopher of Athens, has shown, that life has pleasures as well as pains; and having exhibited the present state of man in brighter colours, draws, with equal appearance of reason, a contrary conclusion.

"You may pass well through any of the paths of life. In public assemblies are honours and transactions of wisdom: in domestic privacy is stillness and quiet: in the country are the beauties of nature: on the sea is the hope of gain: in a foreign land,

he that is rich is honoured, he that is poor may keep his poverty secret: are you married? you have a cheerful house; are you single? you are unencumbered: children are objects of affection: to be without children is to be without care: the time of youth is the time of vigour, and gray hairs are made venerable by piety. It will, therefore, never be a wise man's choice, either not to obtain existence or to lose it; for every state of life has its felicity."

In these epigrams are included most of the questions which have engaged the speculations of the inquirers after happiness; and, though they will not much assist our determinations, they may, perhaps, equally promote our quiet, by showing that no absolute determination ever can be formed.

Whether a public station or private life be desirable, has always been debated. We see here both the allurements and discouragements of civil employments; on one side there is trouble, on the other honour; the management of affairs is vexatious and difficult, but it is the only duty in which wisdom can be conspicuously displayed: it must, then, still be left to every man to choose either ease or glory; nor can any general precept be given, since no man can be happy by the prescription of another.

Thus what is said of children by Posidippus, "that they are occasions of fatigue," and by Metrodorus, "that they are objects of affection," is equally certain; but whether they will give most pain or pleasure must depend on their future conduct and dispositions, on many causes over which the parent can have little influence: there is, therefore, room for all the caprices of imagination, and desire must be proportioned to the hope or fear that shall happen to predominate.

Such is the uncertainty in which we are always likely to remain with regard to questions wherein we have most interest, and which every day affords

us fresh opportunity to examine: we may examine, indeed, but we never can decide, because our faculties are unequal to the subject; we see a little, and form an opinion; we see more, and change it.

This inconstancy and unsteadiness, to which we must so often find ourselves liable, ought certainly to teach us moderation and forbearance towards those who cannot accommodate themselves to our sentiments: if they are deceived, we have no right to attribute their mistake to obstinacy or negligence, because we likewise have been mistaken; we may, perhaps, again change our opinion: and what excuse shall we be able to find for aversion and malignity conceived against him whom we shall then find to have committed no fault, and who offended us only by refusing to follow us in error?

It may likewise contribute to soften that resentment which pride naturally raises against opposition, if we consider that he who differs from us does not always contradict us; he has one view of an object, and we have another; each describes what he sees with equal fidelity, and each regulates his steps by his own eyes: one man, with Posidippus, looks on celibacy as a state of gloomy solitude, without a partner in joy or a comforter in sorrow; the other considers it, with Metrodorus, as a state free from encumbrances, in which a man is at liberty to choose his own gratifications, to remove from place to place in quest of pleasure, and to think of nothing but merriment and diversion: full of these notions, one hastens to choose a wife, and the other laughs at his rashness or pities his ignorance; yet it is possible that each is right, but that each is right only for himself.

Life is not the object of science; we see a little, very little; and what is beyond we can only conjecture. If we inquire of those who have gone before us, we receive small satisfaction; some have travelled life without observation, and some willingly

mislead us. The only thought, therefore, on which we can repose with comfort, is that which presents to us the care of Providence, whose eye takes in the whole of things, and under whose direction all involuntary errors will terminate in happiness.

IMPROVE THE PRESENT HOUR.

“ When once the short-lived mortal dies,
A night enduring seals his eyes.”

CATULLUS.—ADDISON'S *Trans.*

It may have been observed by every reader, that there are certain topics which never are exhausted. Of some images and sentiments the mind of man may be said to be enamoured ; it meets them, however often they occur, with the same ardour which a lover feels at the sight of his mistress, and parts from them with the same regret when they can no longer be enjoyed.

Of this kind are many descriptions which the poets have transcribed from each other, and their successors will probably copy to the end of time ; which will continue to engage, or, as the French term it, to flatter the imagination, as long as human nature shall remain the same.

When a poet mentions the spring, we know that the zephyrs are about to whisper, that the groves are to recover their verdure, the linnets to warble forth their notes of love, and the flocks and herds to frisk over vales painted with flowers : yet who is there so insensible of the beauties of nature, so little delighted with the renovation of the world, as not to feel his heart bound at the mention of the spring ?

When night overshadows a romantic scene, all is stillness, silence, and quiet ; the poets of the grove

cease their melody, the moon towers over the world in gentle majesty, men forget their labours and their cares, and every passion and pursuit is for a while suspended. All this we know already, yet we hear it repeated without weariness; because such is generally the life of man, that he is pleased to think on the time when he shall pause from a sense of his condition.

When a poetical grove invites us to its covert, we know that we shall find what we have already seen, a limpid brook murmuring over pebbles, a bank diversified with flowers, a green arch that excludes the sun, and a natural grot shaded with myrtles; yet who can forbear to enter the pleasing gloom, to enjoy coolness and privacy, and gratify himself once more by scenes with which nature has formed him to be delighted?

Many moral sentiments, likewise, are so adapted to our state, that they find approbation whenever they solicit it, and are seldom read without exciting a gentle emotion in the mind: such is the comparison of the life of man with the duration of a flower; a thought which perhaps every nation has heard warbled in its own language, from the inspired poets of the Hebrews to our own times; yet this comparison must always please, because every heart feels its justness, and every hour confirms it by example.

Such, likewise, is the precept that directs us to use the present hour, and refer nothing to a distant time, which we are uncertain whether we shall reach: this every moralist may venture to inculcate, because it will always be approved, and because it is always forgotten.

This rule is, indeed, every day enforced by arguments more powerful than the dissertations of moralists: we see men pleasing themselves with future happiness, fixing a certain hour for the completion of their wishes, and perishing, some at a greater and some at a less distance from the happy time; all

complaining of their disappointments, and lamenting that they had suffered the years which Heaven allowed them to pass without improvement, and deferred the principal purpose of their lives to the time when life itself was to forsake them.

It is not only uncertain whether, through all the casualties and dangers which beset the life of man, we shall be able to reach the time appointed for happiness or wisdom ; but it is likely that whatever now hinders us from doing that which our reason and conscience declare necessary to be done, will equally obstruct us in times to come. It is easy for the imagination, operating on things not yet existing, to please itself with scenes of unmixed felicity, or plan out courses of uniform virtue ; but good and evil are in real life inseparably united ; habits grow stronger by indulgence, and reason loses her dignity in proportion as she has oftener yielded to temptation : " he that cannot live well to-day," says Martial, " will be less qualified to live well to-morrow."

Of the uncertainty of every human good, every human being seems to be convinced ; yet this uncertainty is voluntarily increased by unnecessary delay, whether we respect external causes or consider the nature of our own minds. He that now feels a desire to do right, and wishes to regulate his life according to his reason, is not sure that, at any future time assignable, he shall be able to rekindle the same ardour ; he that has now an opportunity offered him of breaking loose from vice and folly, cannot know but that he shall hereafter be more entangled, and struggle for freedom without obtaining it.

We are so unwilling to believe anything to our own disadvantage, that we will always imagine the perspicacity of our judgment and the strength of our resolution more likely to increase than to grow less by time ; and therefore conclude that the will

to pursue laudable purposes will be always seconded by the power.

But, however we may be deceived in calculating the strength of our faculties, we cannot doubt the uncertainty of that life in which they must be employed ; we see every day the unexpected death of our friends and our enemies ; we see the graves hourly opened for men older and younger than ourselves ; for the cautious and the careless, the dissolute and the temperate ; for men who, like us, were providing to enjoy or improve hours now irreversibly cut off ; we see all this, and yet, instead of living, let year glide after year in preparations to live.

Men are so frequently cut off in the midst of their projections, that sudden death causes little emotion in them that behold it, unless it be impressed upon the attention by uncommon circumstances. I, like every other man, have outlived multitudes ; have seen ambition sink in its triumphs, and beauty perish in its bloom ; but have been seldom so much affected as by the fate of Euryalus, whom I lately lost as I began to love him.

Euryalus had for some time flourished in a lucrative profession ; but, having suffered his imagination to be fired by unextinguishable curiosity, he grew weary of the same dull round of life, resolved to harass himself no longer with the drudgery of getting money, but to quit his business and his profit, and enjoy for a few years the pleasures of travel. His friends heard him proclaim his resolution without suspecting that he intended to pursue it : but he was constant to his purpose, and with great expedition closed his accounts and sold his moveables, passed a few days in bidding farewell to his companions, and, with all the eagerness of romantic chivalry, crossed the sea in search of happiness. *Whatever place was renowned in ancient or modern history ; whatever region art or nature had dis-*

tinguished, he determined to visit ; full of design and hope, he landed on the Continent ; his friends expected accounts from him of the new scenes that opened in his progress, but were informed in a few days that Euryalus was dead.

Such was the end of Euryalus. He is entered that state whence none shall ever return ; and can now only benefit his friends by remaining to their memories a permanent and efficacious instance of the blindness of desire, and the uncertainty of all terrestrial good. But perhaps every man has, like me, lost an Euryalus ; has known a friend die with happiness in his grasp ; and yet every man continues to think himself secure of life, and defers to some future time of leisure what he knows it will be fatal to have finally omitted.

It is, indeed, with this as with other frailties inherent in our nature : the desire of deferring to another time what cannot be done without the endurance of some pain or forbearance of some pleasure, will, perhaps, never be totally overcome or suppressed ; there will always be something that we shall wish to have finished, and be nevertheless unwilling to begin ; but against this unwillingness it is our duty to struggle, and every conquest over our passions will make way for an easier conquest : custom is equally forcible to bad and good ; nature will always be at variance with reason, but will rebel more feebly as she is oftener subdued.

The common neglect of the present hour is more shameful and criminal, as no man is betrayed to it by error, but admits it by negligence. Of the instability of life, the weakest understanding never thinks wrong, though the strongest often omits to think justly : reason and experience are always ready to inform us of our real state ; but we refuse to listen to their suggestions, because we feel our hearts unwilling to obey them : but, surely, nothing is more unworthy of a reasonable being than to shut his

eyes when he sees the road which he is commanded to travel, that he may deviate with fewer reproaches from himself: nor could any motive to tenderness, except the consciousness that we have all been guilty of the same fault, dispose us to pity those who thus consign themselves to voluntary ruin.

IMMODERATE DESIRES ALIKE UNPROPRIETIOUS TO VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS.

"By virtue's precepts to control
The thirsty cravings of the soul,
Is over wider realms to reign
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to distant Libya join,
And both the Carthages were thine."

HOR.—FRANCIS's Trans.

WHEN Socrates was asked, "Which of mortal men was to be accounted nearest to the *gods* in happiness?" he answered, "That man who is in want of the fewest things."

In this answer, Socrates left it to be guessed by his auditors whether, by the exemption from want which was to constitute happiness, he meant amplitude of possessions or contraction of desire. And, indeed, there is so little difference between them, that Alexander the Great confessed the inhabitant of a tub the next man to the master of the world; and left a declaration to future ages, that, if he was not Alexander, he should wish to be Diogenes.

These two states, however, though they resemble each other in their consequence, differ widely with respect to the facility with which they may be

attained. To make great acquisitions can happen to very few; and in the uncertainty of human affairs, to many it will be incident to labour without reward, and to lose what they already possess by endeavours to make it more; some will always want abilities, and others opportunities to accumulate wealth. It is therefore happy, that nature has allowed us a more certain and easy road to plenty; every man may grow rich by contracting his wishes, and, by quiet acquiescence in what has been given him, supply the absence of more.

Yet so far is almost every man from emulating the happiness of the gods, by any other means than grasping at their power, that it seems to be the great business of life to create wants as fast as they are satisfied. It has been long observed by moralists, that every man squanders or loses a great part of that life, of which every man knows and deplores the shortness: and it may be remarked with equal justness, that though every man laments his own insufficiency to his happiness, and knows himself a necessitous and precarious being, incessantly soliciting the assistance of others, and feeling wants which his own art or strength cannot supply, yet there is no man who does not, by the superaddition of unnatural cares, render himself still more dependant; who does not create an artificial poverty, and suffer himself to feel pain for the want of that, of which, when it is gained, he can have no enjoyment.

It must, indeed, be allowed, that as we lose part of our time because it steals away silent and invisible, and many an hour is passed before we recollect that it is passing, so unnatural desires insinuate themselves unobserved in the mind, and we do not perceive that they are gaining upon us till the pain which they give us awakens us to notice. No man is sufficiently vigilant to take account of every minute of his life, or to watch every motion.

of his heart. Much of our time, likewise, is fixed to custom: we trifle because we see trifle; in the same manner we catch from ex the contagion of desire; we see all about us in pursuit of imaginary good, and begin to bu the same chase, lest greater activity should tr over us.

It is true that to a man, as a member of s many things become necessary, which, perh a state of nature, are superfluous; and that things not absolutely necessary are yet so and convenient that they cannot easily be s I will make yet a more ample and liberal c sion. In opulent states and regular govern the temptations to wealth and rank, and to ti tinctions that follow them, are such as no fo understanding finds it easy to resist.

If, therefore, I saw the quiet of life dis only by endeavours after wealth and hono solicitude, which the world, whether justly c considered as important, I should scarcely had courage to inculcate any precepts of m tition and forbearance. He that is engaged in suit in which all mankind profess to be his is supported by the authority of all mankind the prosecution of his design, and will, ther scarcely stop to hear the lectures of a se philosopher. Nor am I certain that the ac lation of honest gain ought to be hindered, ambition of just honours always to be repr Whatever can enable the possessor to confe benefits upon others, may be desired upon v principles; and we ought not too rashly to a any man of intending to confine the influence acquisitions to himself.

But, if we look round upon mankind, whom we find, among those that fortune permits to their own manners, that is not tormenting hi with a wish for something, of which all the

ure and all the benefit will cease at the moment of attainment? One man is beggaring his posterity to build a house, which, when finished, he never will inhabit; another is levelling mountains to open a prospect, which, when he has enjoyed it, he can enjoy no more; another is painting ceilings, carving wainscots, and filling his apartments with costly furniture, only that some neighbouring house may not be richer or finer than his own.

That splendour and elegance are not desirable, I am not so abstracted from life as to inculcate; but if we inquire closely into the reason for which they are esteemed, we shall find them valued principally as evidences of wealth. Nothing, therefore, can show greater depravity of understanding than to delight in the show when the reality is wanting; or voluntarily to become poor, that strangers may for a time imagine us to be rich.

But there are yet minuter objects and more trifling anxieties. Men may be found who are kept from sleep by the want of a shell particularly variegated; who are wasting their lives in stratagems to obtain a book in a language which they do not understand; who pine with envy at the flowers of another man's parterre; who hover like vultures round the owner of a fossil, in hopes to plunder his cabinet at his death; and who would not much regret to see a street in flames, if a box of medals might be scattered in the tumult.

He that imagines me to speak of these sages in terms exaggerated and hyperbolical, has conversed but little with the race of virtuosos. A slight acquaintance with their studies, and a few visits to their assemblies, would inform him that nothing is so worthless but that prejudice and caprice can give it value; nor anything of so little use but that, by indulging an idle competition or unreasonable pride, a man may make it to himself one of the necessaries of life.

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Desires like these I may surely, without incurring the censure of moroseness, advise every man to repel when they invade his mind; or, if he admits them, never to allow them any greater influence than is necessary to give petty employments the power of pleasing, and diversify the day with slight amusements.

An ardent wish, whatever be its object, will always be able to interrupt tranquillity. What we believe ourselves to want, torments us not in proportion to its real value, but according to the estimation by which we have rated it in our own minds; in some diseases, the patient has been observed to long for food, which scarce any extremity of hunger would in health have compelled him to swallow; but, while his organs were thus depraved, the craving was irresistible, nor could any rest be obtained till it was appeased by compliance. Of the same nature are the irregular appetites of the mind; though they are often excited by trifles, they are equally disquieting with real wants; the Roman, who wept at the death of his lamprey, felt the same degree of sorrow that extorts tears on other occasions.

Inordinate desires, of whatever kind, ought to be repressed upon a yet higher consideration; they must be considered as enemies not only to happiness, but to virtue. There are men among those commonly reckoned the learned and the wise, who spare no stratagems to remove a competitor at an auction, who will sink the price of a rarity at the expense of truth, and whom it is not safe to trust alone in a library or cabinet. These are faults which the fraternity seem to look upon as jocular mischiefs, or to think excused by the violence of temptation: but I shall always fear that he who accustoms himself to fraud in little things, wants only opportunity to practise it in greater; "he that has hardened himself by killing a sheep," says Pythag-

oras, "will with less reluctance shed the blood of a man."

To prize everything according to its *real* use ought to be the aim of a rational being. There are few things which can much conduce to happiness, and, therefore, few things to be ardently desired. He that looks upon the business and bustle of the world with the philosophy with which Socrates surveyed the fair at Athens, will turn away at last with his exclamation, "How many things are here which I do not want!"

THE VARIOUS OCCUPATIONS OF LIFE.

"When in a wood we leave the certain way,
One error fools us, though we various stray,
Some to the left, and some to t'other side."

HOR.—FRANCIS'S *Trans.*

It is common among all classes of mankind to charge each other with trifling away life: every man looks on the occupation or amusement of his neighbour as something below the dignity of our nature, and unworthy of the attention of a rational being.

A man who considers the paucity of the wants of nature, and who, being acquainted with the various means by which all manual occupations are now facilitated, observes what numbers are supported by the labour of a few, would, indeed, be inclined to wonder how the multitudes who are exempted from the necessity of working, either for themselves or others, find business to fill up the vacuities of life. The greater part of mankind neither card the fleece, dig the mine, fell the wood, nor gather in the

harvest; they neither tend herds nor build houses; in what, then, are they employed?

This is certainly a question which a distant prospect of the world will not enable us to answer. We find all ranks and ages mingled together in a tumultuous confusion, with haste in their motions and eagerness in their looks; but what they have to pursue or avoid, a more minute observation must inform us.

When we analyze the crowd into individuals, it soon appears that the passions and imaginations of men will not suffer them to be idle; we see things 'coveted merely because they are rare, and pursued because they are fugitive; we see men conspire to fix an arbitrary value on that which is worthless in itself, and then contend for the possession. One is a collector of fossils, of which he knows no other use than to show them; and, when he has stocked his own repository, grieves that the stones which he has left behind him should be picked up by another. The florist nurses a tulip, and repines that his rival's beds enjoy the same showers and sunshine with his own. This man is hurrying to a concert, only lest others should have heard the new musician before him; another bursts from his company to the play, because he fancies himself the patron of an actress; some spend the morning in consultations with their tailor, and some in directions to their cook; some are forming parties for cards, and some laying wagers at a horse-race.

It cannot, I think, be denied, that some of these lives are passed in trifles: in occupations by which the busy neither benefit themselves nor others, and by which no man could be long engaged who seriously considered what he was doing, or had knowledge enough to compare what he is with what he might be made. However, as people who have the same inclination generally flock together, every trifler is kept in countenance by the sight of others as

unprofitably active as himself ; by kindling the heat of competition, he in time thinks himself important ; and by having his mind intensely engaged, he is secured from weariness of himself.

Some degree of self-approbation is always the reward of diligence ; and I cannot, therefore, but consider the laborious cultivation of petty pleasures as a more happy and more virtuous disposition than that universal contempt and haughty negligence which is sometimes associated with powerful faculties, but is often assumed by indolence when it disowns its name, and aspires to the appellation of greatness of mind.

It has been long observed, that drollery and ridicule is the most easy kind of wit : let it be added, that contempt and arrogance is the easiest philosophy. To find some objection to everything, and to dissolve in perpetual laziness under pretence that occasions are wanting to call forth activity ; to laugh at those who are ridiculously busy, without setting an example of more rational industry, is no less in the power of the meanest than of the highest intellects.

Our present state has placed us at once in such different relations, that every human employment which is not a visible and immediate act of goodness, will be in some respect or other subject to contempt : but it is true, likewise, that almost every act which is not directly vicious, is in some respect beneficial and laudable. "I often," says Bruyère, "observe from my window two beings of erect form and amiable countenance, endowed with the powers of reason, able to clothe their thoughts in language, and convey their notions to each other. They rise early in the morning, and are every day employed till sunset in rubbing two smooth stones together, or, in other terms, in polishing marble."

"If lions could paint," says the fable, "in the room of those pictures which exhibit men vanquish-

ing lions, we should see lions feeding upon men." If the stonecutter could have written like Bruyère, what would he have replied?

"I look up," says he, "every day from my shop upon a man whom the idlers, who stand still to gaze upon my work, often celebrate as a wit and a philosopher. I often perceive his face clouded with care, and am told that his taper is sometimes burning at midnight. The sight of a man who works so much harder than myself excited my curiosity. I heard no sound of tools in his apartment, and, therefore, could not imagine what he was doing; but was told at last that he was writing descriptions of mankind, who, when he had described them, would live just as they had lived before; that he sat up whole nights to change a sentence, because the sound of a letter was too often repeated: that he was often disquieted with doubts about the propriety of a word which everybody understood; that he would hesitate between two expressions equally proper, till he could not fix his choice but by consulting his friends; that he will run from one end of Paris to the other for an opportunity of reading a period to a nice ear; that, if a single line is heard with coldness and inattention, he returns home dejected and disconsolate; and that by all this care and labour he hopes only to make a little book, which at last will teach no useful art, and which none who has it not will perceive himself to want. I have often wondered for what end such a being as this was sent into the world; and should be glad to see those who live thus foolishly seized by an order of the government, and obliged to labour at some useful occupation."

Thus, by a partial and imperfect representation, may everything be made equally ridiculous. He that gazed with contempt on human beings rubbing stones together, might have prolonged the same amusement by walking through the city, and seeing

others, with looks of importance, heaping one brick upon another; or by rambling into the country, where he might observe other creatures of the same kind driving pieces of sharp iron into the clay, or, in the language of men less enlightened, ploughing the field.

As it is thus easy, by a detail of minute circumstances, to make everything little, so it is not difficult, by an aggregation of effects, to make everything great. The polisher of marble may be forming ornaments for the palaces of virtue and the schools of science; or providing tables on which the actions of heroes and the discoveries of sages shall be recorded for the incitement and instruction of future generations. The mason is exercising one of the principal arts by which reasoning beings are distinguished from the brute; the art to which life owes much of its safety and all its convenience, by which we are secured from the inclemency of the seasons, and fortified against the ravages of hostility; and the ploughman is changing the face of nature, diffusing plenty and happiness over kingdoms, and compelling the earth to give food to her inhabitants.

Greatness and littleness are terms merely comparative; and we err in our estimation of things, because we measure them by some wrong standard. The trifler proposes to himself only to equal or excel some other trifler, and is happy or miserable as he succeeds or miscarries: the man of sedentary desire and unactive ambition sits comparing his power with his wishes, and makes his inability to perform things impossible, an excuse to himself for performing nothing. Man can only form a just estimate of his own actions by making his power the test of his performance, by comparing what he does with what he can do. Whoever steadily perseveres in the exertion of all his faculties, does what is great with respect to himself, and what will not be

despised by Him who has given all created beings their different abilities: he faithfully performs the task of life, within whatever limits his labours may be confined, or how soon soever they may be forgotten.

We can conceive so much more than we can accomplish, that whoever tries his own actions by his imagination may appear despicable in his own eyes. He that despises for its littleness anything really useful, has no pretension to applaud the grandeur of his conceptions; since nothing but narrowness of mind hinders him from seeing that, by pursuing the same principles, everything limited will appear contemptible.

He that neglects the care of his family, while his benevolence expands itself in scheming the happiness of imaginary kingdoms, might with equal reason sit on a throne dreaming of universal empire, and of the diffusion of blessings over all the globe: yet even this globe is little compared with the system of matter within our view; and that system barely something more than nonentity compared with the boundless regions of space, to which neither eye nor imagination can extend.

From conceptions, therefore, of what we might have been, and from wishes to be what we are not, conceptions that we know to be foolish, and wishes which we feel to be vain, we must necessarily descend to the consideration of what we are. We have powers very scanty in their utmost extent, but which, in different men, are differently proportioned. Suitably to these powers we have duties prescribed, which we must neither decline for the sake of delighting ourselves with easier amusements, nor overlook in idle contemplation of greater excellence or more extensive comprehension.

In order to the right conduct of our lives, we must remember that we are not born to please ourselves. *He that studies simply his own satisfaction, will al-*

ways find the proper business of his station too hard or too easy for him. But if we bear continually in mind our relation to the Father of Being, by whom we are placed in the world, and who has allotted us the part which we are to bear in the general system of life, we shall be easily persuaded to resign our own inclinations to Unerring Wisdom, and do the work decreed for us with cheerfulness and diligence.

THE PRIDE OF SINGULARITY.

"And mingle something of our times to please."
JUV.—DRYDEN'S *Trans.*

FONTENELLE, in his panegyric on Sir Isaac Newton, closes a long enumeration of that great philosopher's virtues and attainments with an observation that "he was not distinguished from other men by any singularity either natural or affected."

It is an eminent instance of Newton's superiority to the rest of mankind, that he was able to separate knowledge from those weaknesses by which knowledge is generally disgraced; that he was able to excel in science and wisdom without purchasing them by the neglect of little things; and that he stood alone, merely because he had left the rest of mankind behind him, not because he deviated from the beaten track.

Whoever, after the example of Plutarch, should compare the lives of illustrious men, might set this part of Newton's character to view with great advantage by opposing it to that of Bacon, perhaps the only man of latter ages who has any pretensions to dispute with him the palm of genius or science.

Bacon, after he had added to a long and careful contemplation of almost every other object of knowledge a curious inspection into common life, and, after having surveyed nature as a philosopher, had examined "men's business and bosoms" as a statesman, yet failed so much in the conduct of domestic affairs, that, in the most lucrative post to which a great and wealthy kingdom could advance him, he felt all the miseries of distressful poverty, and committed all the crimes to which poverty incites. Such were at once his negligence and rapacity, that, as it is said, he would gain by unworthy practices that money which, when so acquired, his servants might steal from one end of the table, while he sat studious and abstracted at the other.

As scarcely any man has reached the excellence, very few have sunk to the weakness of Bacon: but almost all the studious tribe, as they obtain any participation of his knowledge, feel likewise some contagion of his defects, and obstruct the veneration which learning would procure by follies, greater or less, to which only learning could betray them.

It has been formerly remarked by *The Guardian*, that the world punishes with too great severity the error of those who imagine that the ignorance of little things may be compensated by the knowledge of great; for so it is, that as more can detect petty failings than can distinguish or esteem great qualifications, and as mankind is in general more easily disposed to censure than to admiration, contempt is often incurred by slight mistakes, which real virtue or usefulness cannot counterbalance.

Yet such mistakes and inadvertences it is not easy for a man deeply immersed in study to avoid; no man can become qualified for the common intercourse of life by private meditation; the manners of the world are not a regular system, planned by philosophers upon settled principles, in which every cause has a congruous effect, and one part han-

ference to another. Of the fashions prevalent in every country, a few have arisen, perhaps, from particular temperatures of the climate; a few from the constitution of the government; but greater part have grown up by chance; been led by caprice, been contrived by affectation, or wed without any just motives of choice from countries.

all these, the savage that hunts his prey upon mountains, and the sage that speculates in history, must necessarily live in equal ignorance; by the observation of these trifles it is that the actions of mankind are kept in order; that the address of one to another is regulated, and the general happiness of the world carried on with facility and order.

These things, therefore, though small in themselves, become great by their frequency; and he much mistakes his own interest, who, to the considerable unskilfulness of abstraction and retirement, adds a voluntary neglect of common forms, increases the disadvantages of a studious course of life by an arrogant contempt of those practices which others endeavour to gain favour and multiplied friendships.

A real and interior disdain of fashion and ceremony, indeed, not very often to be found; much greater part of those who pretend to laugh at gravity and formality secretly wish to have possessed those qualifications which they pretend to despise; and because they find it difficult to wash off the tincture which they have so deeply imbibed, endeavour to harden themselves in a sullen abomination of their own colour. Neutrality is a state into which the busy passions of man cannot subside; and he who is in danger of the pangs of envy is generally forced to recreate his imagination with an effort of comfort.

None, however, may be found, who, supported by

the consciousness of great abilities, and elevated by a long course of reputation and applause, voluntarily consign themselves to singularity, affect to cross the roads of life because they know that they shall not be jostled, and indulge a boundless gratification of will because they perceive that they shall be quietly obeyed. Men of this kind are generally known by the name of *Humorists*, an appellation by which he that has obtained it, and can be contented to keep it, is set free at once from the shackles of fashion; and can go in or out, sit or stand, be talkative or silent, gloomy or merry, advance absurdities or oppose demonstration, without any other reprehension from mankind than that it is his way, that he is an odd fellow, and must be let alone.

This seems to many an easy passport through the various factions of mankind; and those on whom it is bestowed appear too frequently to consider the patience with which their caprices are suffered as an undoubted evidence of their own importance, of a genius to which submission is universally paid, and whose irregularities are only considered as consequences of its vigour. These peculiarities, however, are always found to spot a character, though they may not totally obscure it; and he who expects from mankind that they should give up established customs in compliance with his single will, and exacts that deference which he does not pay, may be endured, but can never be approved.

Singularity is, I think, in its own nature universally and invariably displeasing. In whatever respect a man differs from others, he must be considered by them as either worse or better; by being better, it is well known that a man gains admiration oftener than love, since all approbation of his *practice* must necessarily condemn him that gives it; and though a man often pleases by inferiority, there are few who desire to give such pleasure. Yet

the truth is, that singularity is almost always regarded as a brand of slight reproach ; and, where it is associated with acknowledged merit, serves as an abatement or an alloy of excellence, by which weak eyes are reconciled to its lustre, and by which, though kindness is not gained, at least envy is averted.

But let no man be in haste to conclude his own merit so great or conspicuous as to require or justify singularity ; it is as hazardous for a moderate understanding to usurp the prerogatives of genius, as for a common form to play over the airs of uncontested beauty. The pride of men will not patiently endure to see one whose understanding or attainments are but level with their own, break the rules by which they have consented to be bound, or forsake the direction which they submissively follow. All violation of established practice implies in its own nature a rejection of the common opinion, a defiance of common censure, and an appeal from general laws to private judgment : he, therefore, who differs from others without apparent advantage, ought not to be angry if his arrogance is punished with ridicule ; if those whose example he superciliously overlooks point him out to derision, and hoot him back again into the common road.

The pride of singularity is often exerted in little things, where right and wrong are indeterminable, and where, therefore, vanity is without excuse. But there are occasions on which it is noble to dare to stand alone. To be pious among infidels, to be disinterested in a time of general venality, to lead a life of virtue and reason in the midst of sensualists, is a proof of a mind intent on nobler things than the praise or blame of men ; of a soul fixed in the contemplation of the highest good, and superior to the tyranny of custom and example.

In moral and religious questions only, a wise man will hold no consultations with fashion, because these duties are constant and immutable, and de-

pend not on the notions of men, but the commands of Heaven ; yet even of these, the external mode is to be in some measure regulated by the prevailing taste of the age in which we live ; for he is certainly no friend to virtue who neglects to give it any lawful attraction, or suffers it to deceive the eye or alienate the affections for want of innocent compliance with fashionable decorations.

It is yet remembered of the learned and pious Nelson, that he was remarkably elegant in his manners and splendid in his dress. He knew that the eminence of his character drew many eyes upon him, and he was careful not to drive the young or the gay away from religion by representing it as an enemy to any distinction or enjoyment in which human nature may innocently delight.

In this censure of singularity I have, therefore, no intention to subject reason or conscience to custom or example. To comply with the degree and practices of mankind is in some notions the duty of a social being ; because by compliance only he can please, and by pleasing only he can become useful : but as the end is not to be lost for the sake of the means, we are not to give up virtue to complaisance ; for the end of complaisance is only to gain the kindness of our fellow-beings, whose kindness is desirable only as instrumental to happiness, and happiness must be always lost in departing from virtue.

INJUSTICE OF FRIVOLOUSLY ENCROACHING ON THE TIME OF OTHERS.

WHEN Diogenes received a visit in his tub from Alexander the Great, and was asked, according to

the ancient forms of royal courtesy, what petition he had to offer : " I have nothing," said he, " to ask, but that you would remove to the other side, that you may not, by intercepting the sunshine, take from me what you cannot give."

Such was the demand of Diogenes from the greatest monarch of the earth, which those who have less power than Alexander may, with yet more propriety, apply to themselves. He that does much good may be allowed sometimes to do a little harm. But if the opportunities of beneficence be denied by fortune, innocence should at least be vigilantly observed.

It is well known that time once past never returns, and that the moment which is lost is lost for ever. Time, therefore, ought, above all other kinds of property, to be free from invasion ; and yet there is no man who does not claim the power of wasting that time which is the right of others.

This usurpation is so general, that a very small part of the year is spent by choice ; scarcely anything is done when it is intended, or obtained when it is desired. Life is continually ravaged by invaders ; one steals away an hour, and another a day ; one conceals the robbery by hurrying us into business, another by lulling us with amusement ; the depredation is continued through a thousand vicissitudes of tumult and tranquillity, till, having lost all, we can lose no more.

This waste of the lives of men has been very frequently charged upon the great, whose followers linger from year to year in expectations, and die at last with petitions in their hands. Those who raise envy will easily incur censure. I know not whether statesmen and patrons do not suffer more reproaches than they deserve, and may not rather themselves complain, that they are given up a prey to pretensions without merit, and to importunity without shame.

The truth is, that the inconveniences of attendance are more lamented than felt. To the greater number solicitation is its own reward. To be seen in good company, to talk of familiarities with men of power, to be able to tell the freshest news, to gratify inferior circles with predictions of increase or decline of favour, and to be regarded as a candidate for high offices, are compensations more than equivalent to the delay of favours which, perhaps, he that begs them has hardly confidence to expect.

A man, conspicuous in a high station, who multiplies hopes that he may multiply dependants, may be considered as a beast of prey, justly dreaded but easily avoided; his den is known, and they who would not be devoured need not approach it. The great danger of the waste of time is from caterpillars and moths, who are not resisted because they are not feared, and who work on with unheeded mischiefs and invisible encroachments.

He whose rank or merit procures him the notice of mankind, must give up himself, in a great measure, to the convenience or humour of those who surround him. Every man who is sick of himself will fly to him for relief; he that wants to speak will require him to hear; and he that wants to hear will expect him to speak. Hour passes after hour, the noon succeeds to morning, and the evening to noon, while a thousand objects are forced upon his attention, which he rejects as fast as they are offered, but which the custom of the world requires to be received with appearance of regard.

If we will have the kindness of others, we must endure their follies. He who cannot persuade himself to withdraw from society, must be content to pay a tribute of his time to a multitude of tyrants; to the loiterer, who makes appointments which he *never keeps*; to the consulter, who asks advice *which he never takes*; to the boaster, who blusters *only to be praised*; to the complainer, who whines

only to be pitied ; to the projector, whose happiness is to entertain his friends with expectations, which all but himself know to be vain ; to the economist, who tells of bargains and settlements ; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach of alliances ; to the usurer, who compares the different funds ; and to the talker, who talks only because he loves to be talking.

To put every man in possession of his own time, and to rescue the day from the succession of usurpers, is beyond my power and beyond my hope. Yet perhaps some stop might be put to this unmerciful persecution, if all would seriously reflect, that whoever pays a visit that is not desired, or talks longer than the hearer is willing to attend, is guilty of an injury which he cannot repair, and takes away that which he cannot give.

ALWAYS IN A BUSTLE, AND BRINGING NOTHING TO PASS.

Some of those ancient sages that have exercised their abilities in the inquiry after the *supreme good*, have been of opinion that the highest degree of earthly happiness is quiet ; a calm repose both of mind and body, undisturbed by the sight of folly or the noise of business, the tumults of public commotion or the agitations of private interest ; a state in which the mind has no other employment but to observe and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raise systems of science, and form theories of virtue.

To the schemes of these solitary speculatists it has been justly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being useless. That man-

kind is one vast republic, where every individual receives many benefits from the labours of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay ; and that, where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from misery, none have a right to withdraw from their task of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wisdom or solitary pleasures.

It is common for controvertists, in the heat of disputation, to add one position to another till they reach the extremities of knowledge, where truth and falsehood lose their distinction. Their admirers follow them to the brink of absurdity, and then start back from each side towards the middle point. So it has happened in this great disquisition. Many perceive alike the force of the contrary arguments ; find quiet shameful, and business dangerous ; and therefore pass their lives between them : in bustle without business, and negligence without quiet.

Among the principal names of this moderate set is that great philosopher Jack Whirler, whose business keeps him in perpetual motion, and whose motion always eludes his business ; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot stand still because he is wanted in another place, and who is wanted in many places because he stays in none.

Jack has more business than he can conveniently transact in one house ; he has, therefore, one habitation near Bow-Church, and another about a mile distant. By this ingenious distribution of himself between two houses, Jack has contrived to be found at neither. Jack's trade is extensive, and he has many dealers ; his conversation is sprightly, and he has many companions ; his disposition is kind, and he has many friends. Jack neither forbears pleasure for business, nor omits business for pleasure, but is equally invisible to his friends and his customers : to him that comes with an invitation to a club, and to him that waits to settle an account.

When you call at his house, his clerk tells you that Mr. Whirler has just stepped out, but will be at home exactly at two; you wait at a coffee-house till two, and then find that he has been at home and is gone out again, but left word that he should be at the Half-moon tavern at seven, where he hopes to meet you. At seven you go to the tavern. At eight, in comes Mr. Whirler, to tell you that he is glad to see you, and only begs leave to run for a few minutes to a gentleman that lives near the Exchange, from whom he will return before supper can be ready. Away he runs to the Exchange, to tell those who are waiting for him that he must beg them to defer the business till to-morrow, because his time is come at the Half-moon.

Jack's cheerfulness and civility rank him among those whose presence never gives pain, and whom all receive with fondness and caresses. He calls often on his friends to tell them that he will come again to-morrow; on the morrow he comes again to tell them how an unexpected summons hurries him away. When he enters a house, his first declaration is that he cannot sit down; and, so short are his visits, that he seldom appears to have come for any other reason but to say he must go.

The dogs of Egypt, when thirst brings them to the Nile, are said to run as they drink for fear of the crocodiles. Jack Whirler always dines at full speed. He enters, finds the family at table, sits familiarly down, and fills his plate; but, while the first morsel is in his mouth, hears the clock strike, and rises; then goes to another house, sits down again, recollects another engagement; has only time to taste the soup, makes a short excuse to the company, and continues through another street his desultory dinner.

But, overwhelmed as he is with business, his chief desire is to have still more. Every new proposal takes possession of his thoughts; he soon balances

probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almost to completion, and then forsakes it for another, which he catches with some alacrity, urges with the same vehemence, and abandons with the same coldness.

Every man may be observed to have a certain strain of lamentation, some peculiar theme of complaint on which he dwells in his moments of dejection. Jack's topic of sorrow is his want of time. Many an excellent design languishes in empty theory for want of time. For the omission of any civilities, want of time is his plea to others ; for the neglect of any affairs, want of time is his excuse to himself. That he wants time he sincerely believes ; for he once pined away many months with a lingering distemper, for want of time to attend to his health.

Thus Jack Whirler lives in perpetual fatigues without proportionate advantage, because he does not consider that no man can see all with his own eyes, or do all with his own hands ; that whoever is engaged in a multiplicity of business, must transact much by substitution, and leave something to hazard ; and that he who attempts to do all will waste his life in doing little.

BARBARITY, INJUSTICE, AND IMPOLICY OF IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT.

As I was passing lately under one of the gates of this city, I was struck with horror by a rueful cry, which summoned me to *remember the poor debtors.*

The wisdom and justice of the English laws are, by Englishmen at least, loudly celebrated ; but scarcely the most zealous admirers of these institutions can

think that law wise, which, when men are capable of work, obliges them to beg; or just, which exposes the liberty of one to the passions of another.

The prosperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds usefully employed. To the community sedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene, and idleness is an atrophy. Whatever body and whatever society wastes more than it acquires, must gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed and ceases to labour, takes away something from the public stock.

The confinement, therefore, of any man in the sloth and darkness of a prison, is a loss to the nation and no gain to the creditor. For of the multitudes who are pining in those cells of misery, a very small part is suspected of any fraudulent act, by which they retain what belongs to others. The rest are imprisoned by the wantonness of pride, the malignity of revenge, or the acrimony of disappointed expectation.

If those who thus rigorously exercise the power which the law has put into their hands be asked why they continue to imprison those whom they know to be unable to pay them, one will answer, that his debtor once lived better than himself; another, that his wife looked above her neighbours, and his children went in silk clothes to the dancing-school; and another, that he pretended to be a joker and a wit. Some will reply, that if they were in debt they should meet with the same treatment; some, that they owe no more than they can pay, and need, therefore, give no account of their actions. Some will confess their resolution that their debtors shall rot in jail; and some will discover that they hope, by cruelty, to wring the payment from their friends.

The end of all civil regulations is to secure private happiness from private malignity; to keep individuals from the power of one another; but this

end is apparently neglected when a man, irritated with loss, is allowed to be the judge of his own cause, and to assign the punishment of his own pain; when the distinction between guilt and happiness, between casualty and design, is intrusted to eyes blind with interest, to understandings depraved by resentment.

Since poverty is thus punished as a crime, it ought, at least, to be treated with the same lenity as other crimes: the offender ought not to languish at the will of him whom he has offended, but to be allowed some appeal to the justice of his country. There can be no reason why any debtor should be imprisoned but that he may be compelled to payment; and a term should therefore be fixed, in which the creditor should exhibit his accusation of concealed property. If such property can be discovered, let it be given to the creditor; if the charge is not offered or cannot be proved, let the prisoner be dismissed.

Those who made the laws have apparently supposed that every deficiency of payment is the crime of the debtor. But the truth is, that the creditor always shares the act, and often more than shares the guilt of improper trust. It seldom happens that any man imprisons another but for debts which he suffered to be contracted in hope of advantage to himself, and for bargains in which he proportioned his profit to his own opinion of the hazard; and there is no reason why one should punish the other for a contract in which both concurred.

Many of the inhabitants of prisons may justly complain of harder treatment. He that once owes more than he can pay, is often obliged to bribe his creditor to patience by increasing his debt. Worse and worse commodities, at a higher and higher price, are forced upon him; he is impoverished by *compulsive traffic*, and at last overwhelmed in the common receptacles of misery, by debts which, without

his own consent, were accumulated on his head. To the relief of this distress no other objection can be made, but that, by an easy dissolution of debts, fraud will be left without punishment, and imprudence without awe; and that, when insolvency should be no longer punishable, credit will cease.

The motive to credit is the hope of advantage. Commerce can never be at a stop while one man wants what another can supply; and credit will never be denied while it is likely to be repaid with profit. He that trusts one whom he designs to sue, is criminal by the act of *tryst*: the cessation of such insidious traffic is to be desired, and no reason can be given why a change of the law should impair any other.

We see nation trade with nation, where no payment can be compelled. Mutual convenience produces mutual confidence; and the merchants continue to satisfy the demands of each other, though they have nothing to dread but the loss of trade.

An inquiry is said to have been recently made, by which it appears that more than twenty thousand are at this time prisoners for debt.*

We often look with indifference on the successive parts of that which, if the whole were seen together, would shake us with emotion. A debtor is dragged to prison, pitied for a moment, and then forgotten; another follows him, and is lost alike in the caverns of oblivion; but when the whole mass of calamity rises up at once, when twenty thousand reasonable beings are heard, all groaning in unnecessary misery, not by the infirmity of nature, but the mistake or negligence of policy, who can forbear to pity and lament, to wonder and abhor!

There is here no need of declamatory vehemence: we live in an age of commerce and computation; let us, therefore, coolly inquire what is the sum of

* In 1759, in England.

evil which the imprisonment of debtors brings upon the country.

It seems to be the opinion of the later computists, that the inhabitants of England do not exceed six millions,* of which twenty thousand is the three hundredth part. What shall we say of the humanity or the wisdom of a nation that voluntarily sacrifices one in every three hundred to lingering destruction!

The misfortunes of an individual do not extend their influence to many; yet if we consider the effects of consanguinity and friendship, and the general reciprocation of wants and benefits, which make one man dear or necessary to another, it may reasonably be supposed, that every man languishing in prison gives trouble of some kind to two others who love or need him. By this multiplication of misery, we see distress extended to the hundredth part of the whole society.

If we estimate at a shilling a day what is lost by the inaction, and consumed in the support of each man thus chained down to involuntary idleness, the public loss will rise in one year to three hundred thousand pounds; in ten years to more than a sixth part of the circulating coin of the country.

I am afraid that those who are best acquainted with the state of the prisons will confess that my conjecture is too near the truth, when I suppose that the corrosion of resentment, the heaviness of sorrow, the corruption of confined air, the want of exercise, and sometimes of food; the contagion of diseases, from which there is no retreat; and the severity of tyrants, against whom there can be no resistance, and all the complicated horrors of a prison, put an end every year to the life of one in four of those that are shut up from the common comforts of *human life*.

* In 1759.

Thus perish yearly five thousand men overborne with sorrow, consumed by famine, or putrified by filth: many of them in the most vigorous and useful part of life; for the thoughtless and imprudent are commonly young, and the active and busy are seldom old.

According to the rule generally received, which supposes that one in thirty dies yearly, the race of man may be said to be renewed at the end of thirty years. Who would have believed, till now, that of every English generation, a hundred and fifty thousand perish in jails! that in every century, a nation eminent for science, studious of commerce, ambitious of empire, should willingly lose in noisome dungeons five hundred thousand of its inhabitants; a number greater than has ever been destroyed in the same time by the pestilence and sword!

A very late occurrence may show the value of the number thus condemned to be useless; in the re-establishment of the trained bands, thirty thousand are considered as a force sufficient against all exigencies. While, therefore, we detain twenty thousand in prison, we shut up in darkness and uselessness two thirds of an army judged equal to the defence of the country.

The monastic institutions have been often blamed as tending to retard the increase of mankind. And perhaps retirement ought rarely to be permitted, except to those whose employment is consistent with abstraction, and who, though solitary, will not be idle: to those whom infirmity makes useless to the commonwealth, or to those who have paid their due proportion to society, and who, having lived for others, may be honourably dismissed to live for themselves. But, whatever be the evil or the folly of these retreats, those have no right to censure them whose prisons contain greater numbers than the monasteries of other countries. It is surely less foolish and less criminal to permit inaction than

compel it; to comply with doubtful opinions of happiness, than condemn to certain and apparent misery; to indulge the extravagances of erroneous piety, than to multiply and enforce temptations to wickedness.

The misery of jails is not half their evil: they are filled with every corruption which poverty and wickedness can generate between them; with all the shameless and profligate enormities that can be produced by the impudence of ignominy, the rage of want, and the malignity of despair. In a prison the awe of the public eye is lost, and the power of the law is spent; there are few fears, there are no blushes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the audacious. Every one fortifies himself as he can against his own sensibility, endeavours to practise on others the arts which are practised on himself; and gains the kindness of his associates by similitude of manners.

Thus some sink amid their misery, and others survive only to propagate villainy. It may be hoped that lawgivers will at length take away this power of starving and depraving one another; but if there be any reason why this inveterate evil should not be removed in our age, which true policy has enlightened beyond any former time, let those whose writings form the opinions and the practices of their contemporaries, endeavour to transfer the reproach of such imprisonment from the debtor to the creditor, till universal infamy shall pursue the wretch whose wantonness of power or revenge of disappointment condemns another to torture and to ruin, till he shall be hunted through the world as an enemy to man, and find in riches no shelter from contempt.

Surely he whose debtor has perished in prison, *although he may acquit himself of deliberate murder, must at least have his mind clouded with discontent when he considers how much another has*

suffered from him; when he thinks on the wife bemoaning her husband, or the children begging the bread which their father would have earned. If there are any made so obdurate by avarice or cruelty as to revolve these consequences without dread or pity, I must leave them to be awakened by some other power, for I write only to human beings.*

ON FRIENDSHIP.

LIFE has no pleasure higher or nobler than that of friendship. It is painful to consider that this sublime enjoyment may be impaired or destroyed by innumerable causes, and that there is no human possession of which the duration is less certain.

Many have talked, in very exalted language, of the perpetuity of friendship, of invincible constancy, and unalienable kindness; and some examples have been seen of men who have continued faithful to their earliest choice, and whose affection has predominated over changes of fortune and contrariety of opinion.

But these instances are memorable because they are rare. The friendship which is to be practised or expected by common mortals, must take its rise from mutual pleasure, and must end when power ceases of delighting each other.

* The writer of this admirable Essay was greatly in advance of the common sentiment of his age in relation to the savage laws which he here so feelingly and indignantly condemns. As Americans, we have reason to rejoice that this vile relict of barbarism no longer disgraces many portions of our country, and that the time is not distant when, in the remaining portions, it must inevitably yield to the irresistible power of enlightened public sentiment.

Many accidents, therefore, may happen, by which the ardour of kindness will be abated, without criminal baseness or contemptible inconstancy on either part. To give pleasure is not always in our power; and little does he know himself who believes that he can be always able to receive it.

Those who would gladly pass their days together may be separated by the different course of their affairs: and friendship, like love, is destroyed by long absence, though it may be increased by short intermissions. What we have missed long enough to want it, we value more when it is regained; but that which has been lost till it is forgotten, will be found at last with little gladness, and with still less if a substitute has supplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he used to open his bosom, and with whom he shared the hours of leisure and merriment, feels the day at first hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppress, and his doubts distract him; he sees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is sadness within and solitude about him. But this uneasiness never lasts long; necessity produces expedients, new amusements are discovered, and new conversation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently disappointed than that which naturally arises in the mind from the prospect of meeting an old friend after long separation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed; no man considers how much alteration time has made in himself, and very few inquire what effect it has had upon others. The first hour convinces them that the pleasure which they have formerly enjoyed is for ever at an end; different scenes have made different impressions; the opinions of both are changed; and that similitude of manners and sentiment is lost which confirmed them both in the approbation of themselves.

Friendship is often destroyed by opposition of interest; not only by the ponderous and visible interest which the desire of wealth and greatness forms and maintains, but by a thousand secret and slight competitions, scarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is scarcely any man without some favourite trifle which he values above greater attainments; some desire of petty praise which he cannot patiently suffer to be frustrated. This minute ambition is sometimes crossed before it is known, and sometimes defeated by wanton petulance; but such attacks are seldom made without the loss of friendship; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the resentment will burn on in secret, of which shame hinders the discovery.

This, however, is a slow malignity, which a wise man will obviate as inconsistent with quiet, and a good man will repress as contrary to virtue; but human happiness is sometimes violated by some more sudden strokes.

A dispute, begun in jest, upon a subject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careless indifference, is continued by the desire of conquest, till vanity kindles into rage, and opposition rankles into enmity. Against this hasty mischief I know not what security can be obtained: men will be sometimes surprised into quarrels; and though they might both hasten to reconciliation as soon as their tumult had subsided, yet two minds will seldom be found together which can at once subdue their discontent or immediately enjoy the sweets of peace, without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendship has other enemies. Suspicion is always hardening the cautious, and disgust repelling the delicate. Very slender differences will sometimes part those whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. *Lonelove and Ranger*

retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in six weeks cold and petulant: Ranger's pleasure was to walk in the fields, and Lonelove's to sit in a bower; each had complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The most fatal disease of friendship is gradual decay, or dislike hourly increased by causes too slender for complaint and too numerous for removal. Those who are angry may be reconciled; those who have been injured may receive a recompence; but when the desire of pleasing and willingness to be pleased is silently diminished, the renovation of friendship is hopeless; as, when the vital powers sink into languor, there is no longer any use of the physician.

MENTAL INANITY THE CAUSE WHY SO MANY LIVE WITHOUT THINKING.

WHEN man sees one of the inferior creatures perched upon a tree or basking in the sunshine, without any apparent endeavour or pursuit, he often asks himself or his companion, *On what that animal can be supposed to be thinking?*

Of this question, since neither bird nor beast can answer it, we must be content to live without the resolution. We know not how much the brutes recollect of the past or anticipate of the future; what power they have of comparing and preferring; or whether their faculties may not rest in motionless indifference, till they are moved by the presence of their proper object, or stimulated to act by corporeal sensations.

I am the less inclined to these superfluous inqui-

ries, because I have always been able to find sufficient matter for curiosity in my own species. It is useless to go far in quest of that which may be found at home; a very narrow circle of observation will supply a sufficient number of men and women, who might be asked, with equal propriety, *On what they can be thinking?*

It is reasonable to believe that thought, like everything else, has its causes and effects; that it must proceed from something known, done, or suffered; and must produce some action or event. Yet how great is the number of those in whose minds no source of thought has ever been opened, in whose life no thought of consequence is ever discovered; who have learned nothing upon which they can reflect; who have neither seen nor felt anything which could leave its traces on the memory; who neither foresee nor desire any change of their condition, and have therefore neither fear, hope, nor design, and yet are supposed to be thinking beings.

Life is commonly considered as either active or contemplative; but surely this division, how long soever it has been received, is inadequate and fallacious. There are mortals whose life is certainly not active, for they do neither good nor evil; and whose life cannot properly be called contemplative, for they never attend either to the conduct of men or the works of nature, but rise in the morning, look round them till night in careless stupidity, go to bed and sleep, and rise again in the morning.

It has been lately a celebrated question in the schools of philosophy, *Whether the soul always thinks.* Some have defined the soul to be the *power of thinking*; concluded that its essence consists in acts; that if it should cease to act it would cease to be; and that cessation of thought is but another name for extinction of mind. This argument is subtile, but not conclusive; because it supposes what cannot be proved, that the nature of mind is properly defined.

Others affect to disdain subtilty when subtilty will not serve their purpose, and appeal to daily experience. We spend many hours, they say, in sleep without the least remembrance of any thoughts which then passed in our minds ; and, since we can only, by our own consciousness, be sure that we think, why should we imagine that we have had thought of which no consciousness remains ?

This argument, which appeals to experience, may from experience be confuted. We every day do something which we forget when it is done, and know to have been done only by consequence. The waking hours are not denied to have been passed in thought ; yet he that shall endeavour to recollect on one day the ideas of a former, will only turn the eye of reflection upon vacancy ; he will find that the greater part is irrevocably vanished, and wonder how the moments could come and go, and leave so little behind them.

To discover only that the arguments on both sides are defective, and to throw back the tenet into its former uncertainty, is the sport of wanton or malvolent skepticism, delighting to see the sons of philosophy at work upon a task which never can be decided. I shall suggest an argument hitherto overlooked, which may, perhaps, determine the controversy.

If it be impossible to think without materials, there must necessarily be minds that do not always think ; and whence shall we furnish materials for the meditation of the glutton between his meals, of the sportsman in a rainy month, of the annuitant between the days of quarterly payment, of the politician when the mails are detained by contrary winds ?

But how frequent soever may be the examples of existence without thought, it is certainly a state not much to be desired. He that lives in torpid insensibility, wants nothing of a carcass but putrefaction.

It is the part of every inhabitant of the earth to partake the pains and pleasures of his fellow-beings; and, as in a road through a country desert and uniform, the traveller languishes for want of amusement, so the passage of life will be tedious and irksome to him who does not beguile it by diversified ideas.

WEAKNESS OF HUMAN RESOLUTIONS.

It has been the endeavour of all those whom the world has reverenced for superior wisdom, to persuade man to be acquainted with himself, to learn his own powers and his own weakness, to observe by what evil he is most dangerously beset, and by what temptations most easily overcome.

This counsel has been often given with serious dignity, and often received with appearance of conviction; but, as very few can search deep into their own minds without meeting what they wish to hide from themselves, scarcely any man persists in cultivating such disagreeable acquaintance, but draws the veil again between his eyes and his heart, leaves his passions and appetites as he found them, and advises others to look into themselves.

This is the common result of inquiry even among those that endeavour to grow wiser or better; but this endeavour is far enough from frequency; the greater part of the multitudes that swarm upon the earth have never been disturbed by such uneasy curiosity, but deliver themselves up to business or to pleasure, plunge into the current of life whether placid or turbulent, and pass on from one point of prospect to another, attentive rather to anything than the state of their minds; satisfied at an easy

rate with an opinion that they are no worse than others, that every man must mind his own interest, or that their pleasures hurt only themselves, and are therefore no proper subjects of censure.

Some, however, there are whom the intrusion of scruples, the recollection of better notions, or the latent reprobation of good examples, will not suffer to live entirely contented with their own conduct; these are forced to pacify the mutiny of reason with fair promises, and quiet their thoughts with designs of calling all their actions to review, and planning a new scheme for the time to come.

There is nothing which we estimate so fallaciously as the force of our own resolutions, nor any fallacy which we so unwillingly and tardily detect. He that has resolved a thousand times, and a thousand times deserted his own purpose, suffers no abatement of his confidence, but still believes himself his own master, and able, by innate vigour of soul, to press forward to his end through all the obstructions that inconveniences or delights can put in his way.

That this mistake should prevail for a time is very natural. When conviction is present and temptation out of sight, we do not easily conceive how any reasonable being can deviate from his true interest. What ought to be done while it yet hangs only in speculation, is so plain and certain that there is no place for doubt; the whole soul yields itself to the predominance of truth, and readily determines to do what, when the time of action comes, will be at last omitted.

I believe most men may review all the lives that have passed within their observation without remembering one efficacious resolution, or being able to tell a single instance of a course of practice suddenly changed in consequence of a change of opinion or an establishment of determination. Many, indeed, alter their conduct, and are not at first what

they were at thirty ; but they commonly varied imperceptibly from themselves, followed the train of external causes, and rather suffered reformation than made it.

It is not uncommon to charge the difference between promise and performance, between profession and reality, upon deep design and studied deceit ; but the truth is, that there is very little hypocrisy in the world : we do not so often endeavour or wish to impose on others as on ourselves ; we resolve to do right, we hope to keep our resolutions, we declare them to confirm our hope, and fix our own inconstancy by calling witnesses of our actions ; but at last habit prevails, and those whom we invited to our triumph laugh at our defeat.

Custom is commonly too strong for the most resolute resolver, though furnished for the assault with all the weapons of philosophy. "He that endeavours to free himself from an ill habit," says Bacon, "must not change too much at a time, lest he should be discouraged by difficulty ; nor too little, for then he will make but slow advances." This is a precept which may be applauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Those who have been able to conquer habit, are like those that are fabled to have returned from the realms of Pluto :

"To few impartial Jove extends his love,
And virtue only lifts the soul above."

They are sufficient to give hope, but not security ; to animate the contest, but not to promise victory.

Those who are in the power of evil habits must conquer them as they can ; and conquered they must be, or neither wisdom nor happiness can be attained ; but those who are not yet subject to their influence may, by timely caution, preserve their freedom ; they may effectually resolve to escape the tyrant, whom they will very vainly resolve to conquer.

THE VARIOUS KINDS OF IDLENESS.

MANY moralists have remarked that pride has, of all human vices, the widest dominion, appears in the greatest multiplicity of forms, and lies hid under the greatest variety of disguises ; of disguises which, like the moon's *veil of brightness*, are both its *lustre* and its *shade*, and betray it to others, though they hide it from ourselves.

It is not my intention to degrade pride from this pre-eminence of mischief ; yet I know not whether idleness may not maintain a very doubtful and obstinate competition.

There are some that profess idleness in its full dignity, who call themselves the *Idle*, as Busiris in the play calls himself the *Proud* ; who boast that they can do nothing, and thank their stars that they have nothing to do ; who sleep every night till they can sleep no longer, and rise only that exercise may enable them to sleep again ; who prolong the reign of darkness by double curtains ; and never see the sun but to *tell him how they hate his beams* ; whose whole labour is to vary the posture of indulgence, and whose day differs from their night but as a couch or chair differs from a bed.

These are the true and open votaries of idleness, for whom she weaves the garlands of poppies, and into whose cup she pours the waters of oblivion ; who exist in a state of unruffled stupidity, forgetting and forgotten ; who have long ceased to live, and at whose death the survivors can only say that they have ceased to breathe.

But idleness predominates in many lives where it is not suspected ; for, being a vice which terminates in itself, it may be enjoyed without injury to others ; and it is therefore not watched like fraud, which

endangers property ; or like pride, which naturally seeks its gratification in another's inferiority. Idleness is a silent and peaceful quality, that neither raises envy by ostentation nor hatred by opposition ; and therefore nobody is busy to censure or detect it.

As pride sometimes is hid under humility, idleness is often covered by turbulence and hurry. He that neglects his known duty and real employment, naturally endeavours to crowd his mind with something that may bar out the remembrance of his own folly, and does anything but what he ought to do with eager diligence, that he may keep himself in his own favour.

Some are always in a state of preparation, occupied in previous measures, forming plans, accumulating materials, and providing for the main affair. These are certainly under the secret power of idleness. Nothing is to be expected from the workman whose tools are for ever to be sought. I was once told by a great master that no man ever excelled in painting who was eminently curious about pencils and colours.

There are others to whom idleness dictates another expedient, by which life may be passed unprofitably away without the tediousness of many vacant hours. The art is to fill the day with petty business, to have always something in hand which may raise curiosity but not solicitude, and keep the mind in a state of action but not of labour.

This art has for many years been practised by my old friend Sober with wonderful success. Sober is a man of strong desires and quick imagination, so exactly balanced by the love of ease that they can seldom stimulate him to any difficult undertaking ; they have, however, so much power, that they will not suffer him to lie quite at rest ; and, though they do not make him sufficiently useful to others, they make him, at least, weary of himself.

Mr. Sober's chief pleasure is conversation ; there
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is no end of his talk or his attention ; to speak or to hear is equally pleasing ; for he still fancies that he is teaching or learning something, and is free for the time from his own reproaches.

But there is one time at night when he must go home, that his friends may sleep ; and another time in the morning when all the world agrees to shut out interruption. These are the moments of which poor Sober trembles at the thought. But the misery of these irksome intervals he has many means of alleviating. He has persuaded himself that the manual arts are undeservedly overlooked ; he has observed in many trades the effects of close thought and just ratiocination. From speculation he proceeded to practice, and supplied himself with the tools of a carpenter, with which he mended his coalbox very successfully, and which he still continues to employ as he finds occasion.

He has attempted, at other times, the crafts of shoemaker, tinman, plumber, and potter ; in all these arts he has failed, and resolves to qualify himself for them by better information. But his daily amusement is chemistry. He has a small furnace which he employs in distillation, and which has long been the solace of his life. He draws oils and waters, and essences and spirits, which he knows to be of no use, sits and counts the drops as they come from his retort, and forgets that while a drop is falling a moment flies away.

Poor Sober ! I have often teased him with reproof, and he has often promised reformation ; for no man is so much open to conviction as the *Idler*, but there is none on which it operates so little. What will be the effect of this paper I know not ; perhaps he will read it and laugh, and light the fire in his furnace ; but my hope is that he will quit his trifles, and betake himself to rational and useful diligence.

THOUGHTS ON SLEEP.

Among the innumerable mortifications that way-lay human arrogance on every side, may well be reckoned our ignorance of the most common objects and effects, a defect of which we become more sensible by every attempt to supply it. Vulgar and inactive minds confound familiarity with knowledge, and conceive themselves informed of the whole nature of things when they are shown their form or told their use; but the speculatist, who is not content with superficial views, harasses himself with fruitless curiosity, and still, as he acquires more, perceives only that he knows less.

Sleep is a state in which a great part of every life is passed. No animal has yet been discovered whose existence is not varied with intervals of insensibility; and some late philosophers have extended the empire of sleep over the vegetable world.

Yet of this change, so frequent, so great, so general, and so necessary, no searcher has yet found either the efficient or final cause; or can tell by what power the mind and body are thus chained down in irresistible stupefaction; or what benefits the animal receives from this alternate suspension of its active powers.

Whatever may be the multiplicity or contrariety of opinions upon this subject, Nature has taken sufficient care that theory shall have little influence on practice. The most diligent inquirer is not able long to keep his eyes open; the most eager disputant will begin about midnight to desert his argument; and once in four-and-twenty hours, the gay and the gloomy, the witty and the dull, the clamorous and the silent, the busy and the idle, are all

overpowered by the gentle tyrant, and all lie down in the equality of sleep.

Philosophy has often attempted to repress insolence, by asserting that all conditions are levelled by death; a position which, however it may deject the happy, will seldom afford much comfort to the wretched. It is far more pleasing to consider that sleep is equally a leveller with death; that the time is never at a great distance when the balm of rest shall be diffused alike on every head, when the diversities of life shall stop their operation, and the high and low shall lie down together.

It is somewhere recorded of Alexander, that in the pride of conquest and intoxication of flattery, he declared that he only perceived himself to be a man by the necessity of sleep. Whether he considered sleep as necessary to his mind or body, it was, indeed, a sufficient evidence of human infirmity; the body, which required such frequency of renovation, gave but faint promise of immortality; and the mind, which from time to time sunk gladly into insensibility, had made no very near approaches to the felicity of the supreme and self-sufficient nature.

I know not what can tend more to repress all the passions that disturb the peace of the world, than the consideration that there is no height of happiness or honour from which man does not eagerly descend to a state of unconscious repose; that the best condition of life is such, that we contentedly quit its good to be disentangled from its evils; that in a few hours splendour fades before the eye, and praise itself deadens in the ear: the senses withdraw from their objects, and reason favours the retreat.

What, then, are the hopes and prospects of covetousness, ambition, and rapacity? Let him that desires most have all his desires gratified, he never shall attain a state which he can for a day and a

night contemplate with satisfaction, or from which, if he had the power of perpetual vigilance, he would not long for periodical separations.

All envy would be extinguished if it were universally known that there are none to be envied, and surely none can be much envied who are not pleased with themselves. There is reason to suspect that the distinctions of mankind have more show than value, when it is found that all agree to be weary alike of pleasures and of cares; that the powerful and the weak, the celebrated and obscure, join in one common wish, and implore from nature's hand the nectar of oblivion.

Such is our desire of abstraction from ourselves, that very few are satisfied with the quantity of stupefaction which the needs of the body force upon the mind. Alexander himself added intemperance to sleep, and solaced with the fumes of wine the sovereignty of the world; and almost every man has some art by which he steals his thoughts away from his present state.

It is not much of life that is spent in close attention to any important duty. Many hours of every day are suffered to fly away without any traces left upon the intellect. We suffer phantoms to rise up before us, and amuse ourselves with the dance of airy images, which, after a time, we dismiss for ever, and know not how we have been busied.

Many have no happier moments than those that they pass in solitude, abandoned to their own imagination, which sometimes puts sceptres in their hands or mitres on their heads, shifts the scene of pleasure with endless variety, bids all the forms of beauty sparkle before them, and gluts them with every change of visionary luxury.

It is easy in these semi-slumbers to collect all the possibilities of happiness, to alter the course of the sun, to bring back the past, and anticipate the future; to unite all the beauties of all seasons, and

all the blessings of all climates, to receive and bestow felicity, and forget that misery is the lot of man. All this is a voluntary dream, a temporary recession from the realities of life to airy fiction; an habitual subjection of reason to fancy.

Others are afraid to be alone, and amuse themselves by a perpetual succession of companions; but the difference is not great: in solitude we have our dreams to ourselves, and in company we agree to dream in concert. The end sought in both is forgetfulness of ourselves.

THE BUYING HOUSEWIFE.

If it be difficult to persuade the idle to be busy, it is likewise, as experience has taught me, not easy to convince the busy that it is better to be idle.

I am the unfortunate husband of a *buyer of bargains*. My wife has somewhere heard that a good housewife *never* has anything to *purchase when it is wanted*. This maxim is often in her mouth and always in her head. She is not one of those philosophical talkers that speculate without practice, and learn sentences of wisdom only to repeat them; she is always making additions to her stores; she never looks into a broker's shop but she spies something that may be wanted some time; and it is impossible to make her pass the door of a house where she hears *goods selling by auction*.

Whatever she thinks cheap she holds it the duty of an economist to buy; in consequence of this maxim, we are encumbered on every side with useless lumber. The servants can scarcely creep to their beds through the chests and boxes that surround them. The carpenter is employed once a

week in building closets, fixing cupboards, and fastening shelves ; and my house has the appearance of a ship stored for a voyage to the colonies.

I had often observed that advertisements set her on fire ; and, therefore, pretending to emulate her laudable frugality, I forbade the newspaper to be taken any longer ; but my precaution is vain ; I know not by what fatality or by what confederacy every catalogue of *genuine furniture* comes to her hand, every advertisement of a newspaper newly opened is in her pocket-book, and she knows, before any of her neighbours, when the stock of any man *leaving off trade* is to be *sold cheap for ready money*.

Such intelligence is to my dear one the Siren's song. No engagement, no duty, no interest can withhold her from a sale, from which she always returns congratulating herself upon her dexterity at a bargain ; the porter lays down his burden in the hall : she displays her new acquisitions, and spends the rest of the day in contriving where they shall be put.

As she cannot bear to have anything incomplete, one purchase necessitates another ; she has twenty feather-beds more than she can use, and a late sale has supplied her with a proportionable number of Whitney blankets, a large roll of linen for sheets, and five quilts for every bed, which she bought because the seller told her that, if she would clear his hands, he would let her have a bargain.

Thus, by hourly encroachments, my habitation is made narrower and narrower ; the dining-room is so crowded with tables that dinner can scarcely be served ; the parlour is decorated with so many piles of china, that I dare not step within the door ; at every turn of the stairs I have a clock, and half the windows of the upper floors are darkened, that shelves may be set before them.

This, however, might be borne if she would gratify her own inclinations without opposing mine.

But I, who am idle, am luxurious, and she condemns me to live upon salt provision. She knows the loss of buying in small quantities; we have, therefore, whole hogs and quarters of oxen. Part of our meat is tainted before it is eaten, and part is thrown away because it is spoiled; but she persists in her system, and will never buy anything by single pennyworths.

The common vice of those who are still grasping at more, is to neglect that which they already possess; but from this failing my charmer is free. It is the great care of her life that the pieces of beef shall be boiled in the order in which they are bought; that the second bag of peas be not opened till the first are eaten; that every feather-bed be lain on in its turn; that the carpets are taken out of the chests once a month and brushed; and the rolls of linen opened now and then before the fire. She is daily inquiring after the best traps for mice, and keeps the rooms always scented by fumigations to destroy the moths. She employs a workman from time to time to adjust six clocks that never go, and clean five jacks that rust in the garret; and a woman in the next alley lives by scouring the brass and pewter, which are only laid up to tarnish again.

She is always imagining some distant time in which she shall use whatever she accumulates; she has four looking-glasses which she cannot hang up in her house, but which will be handsome in more lofty rooms; and she pays rent for the place of a vast copper in some warehouse, because, when we live in the country, we shall brew our own beer.

Of this life I have long been weary, but I know not how to change it; all the married men whom I consult advise me to have patience: but some old bachelors are of opinion, that, since she loves sales *so well*, she should have a sale of her own; and I have, I think, resolved to open her hoards, and *advertise an auction*.

THINGS THE MOST NECESSARY MOST EASILY OBTAINED.

Those who are skilled in the extraction and preparation of metals, declare that iron is everywhere to be found; and that not only its proper ore is copiously treasured in the caverns of the earth, but that its particles are dispersed throughout all other bodies.

If the extent of the human view could comprehend the whole frame of the universe, I believe it would be found invariably true, that Providence has given that in greatest plenty which the condition of life makes of greatest use; and that nothing is penitentially imparted or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal distribution or more easy acquisition would increase real and rational felicity.

Iron is common and gold is rare. Iron contributes so much to supply the wants of nature, that its use constitutes much of the difference between savage and polished life, between the state of him that slumbers in European palaces, and him that shelters himself in the cavities of a rock from the chillness of the night or the violence of the storm. Gold can never be hardened into saws or axes; it can neither furnish instruments of manufacture, utensils of agriculture, nor weapons of defence; its only quality is to shine, and the value of its lustre arises from its scarcity.

Through the whole circle, both of natural and moral life, necessaries are as iron, and superfluities as gold. What we really need we may readily obtain; so readily that far the greater part of mankind has, in the wantonness of abundance, con-

founded natural with artificial desires, and invented necessities for the sake of employment, because the mind is impatient of inaction, and life is sustained with so little labour that the tediousness of idle time cannot otherwise be supported.

Thus plenty is the original cause of many of our needs ; and even the poverty, which is so frequent and distressful in civilized nations, proceeds often from that change of manners which opulence has produced. Nature makes us poor only when we want necessities, but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities.

When Socrates passed through shops of toys and ornaments, he cried out, *How many things are here which I do not need !* And the same exclamation may every man make who surveys the common accommodations of life.

Superfluity and difficulty begin together. To dress food for the stomach is easy ; the art is to irritate the palate when the stomach is sufficed. A rude hand may build walls, form roofs, and lay floors, and provide all that warmth and security require ; we only call the nicer artificers to carve the cornice or to paint the ceilings. Such dress as may enable the body to endure the different seasons, the most unenlightened nations have been able to procure ; but the work of science begins in the ambition of distinction, in variations of fashion, and emulation of elegance. Corn grows with easy culture ; the gardener's experiments are only employed to exalt the flavours of fruits and brighten the colours of flowers.

Even of knowledge, those parts are most easy which are generally necessary. The intercourse of society is maintained without the elegances of language. Figures, criticisms, and refinements are the work of those whom idleness makes weary of themselves. The commerce of the world is carried on by easy methods of computation. Subtilty

and study are required only when questions are invented to puzzle, and calculations are extended to show the skill of the calculator. The light of the sun is equally beneficial to him whose eyes tell him that it moves, and to him whose reason persuades him that it stands still; and plants grow with the same luxuriance, whether we suppose earth or water the parent of vegetation.

If we raise our thoughts to nobler inquiries, we shall still find facility concurring with usefulness. No man needs stay to be virtuous till the moralists have determined the essence of virtue; our duty is made apparent by its proximate consequences, though the general and ultimate reason should never be discovered. Religion may regulate the life of him to whom the Scotists and Thomists are alike unknown; and the assertors of fate and free will, however different in their talk, agree to act in the same manner.

It is not my intention to depreciate the politer arts or abstruser studies. That curiosity which always succeeds ease and plenty, was undoubtedly given us as a proof of capacity which our present state is not able to fill, as a preparative for some better mode of existence, which shall furnish employment for the whole soul, and where pleasure shall be adequate to our powers of fruition. In the mean time, let us gratefully acknowledge that Goodness which grants us ease at a cheap rate, which changes the seasons where the nature of heat and cold has not been yet examined, and gives the vicissitudes of day and night to those who never marked the tropics or numbered the constellations.

RELIGION THE ONLY AVAILING SUPP UNDER THE ILLS OF LIFE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the warnings of philosophy and the daily examples of losses and misfortunes which life forces upon our observation, such is the absorption of our thoughts in the business of present day, such the resignation of our reason, such the empty hopes of future felicity, or such our unwillingness to foresee what we dread, that every calamity comes suddenly upon us, and not only presses us as a burden, but crushes us as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common course of nature, against which it is no reproach to be provided. A flash of lightning intercepts the traveller in his way. The concussion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their habitants. But other miseries time brings, these silently, yet visibly, forward by its even lapse, which yet approach us unseen because we turn our eyes away, and seize us unresisted because we could not arm ourselves against them but by setting them before us.

That it is vain to shrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourselves which in some time be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect; and perhaps none more than the speculative reasoner, whose thoughts are always from home, whose eye wanders over whose fancy dances after meteors of happiness kindled by itself, and who examines everything rather than his own state.

Nothing is more evident than that the decay of the body must terminate in death; yet there is no man, says Tully, who does not believe that he may live another year; and there is none who does

upon the same principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend ; but the fallacy will be in time detected ; the last year, the last day must come. It has come and is past. The life which made my own life pleasant is at an end, and the gates of death are shut upon my prospects.

The loss of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wish and endeavour tended, is a state of dreary desolation, in which the mind looks abroad impatient of itself, and finds nothing but emptiness and horror. The blameless life, the artless tenderness, the pious simplicity, the modest resignation, the patient sickness, and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to the loss, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen sorrow for what cannot be recalled.

These are the calamities by which Providence gradually disengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may repel or hope mitigate ; but irreparable privation leaves nothing to exercise resolution or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languishment and grief.

Yet such is the course of nature, that whoever lives long must outlive those whom he loves and honours ; such is the condition of our present existence, that life must one time lose its associations, and every inhabitant of the earth walk downward to the grave alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any interested witness of his misfortunes or success.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel ; for where is the bottom of the misery of man ? But what is success to him who has no friends to enjoy it ? Happiness is not found in self-contemplation : it is perceived only when it is reflected from another.

We know little of the state of departed souls, because such knowledge is not necessary to a good life. Reason deserts us at the brink of the grave,

and can give no further intelligence. Revelation is not wholly silent. "There is joy in the angels of Heaven over one sinner that repents."²³ and surely this joy is not incommunicable to souls disengaged from the body, and made like angels.

Let hope, therefore, dictate what revelation does not create, that the union of souls may still remain; and that we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward.

These are the great occasions which force the mind to take refuge in religion; when we have no help in ourselves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater power? and to what hope may we not raise our eyes and hearts when we consider that the greatest power is the best?

Surely there is no man who, thus afflicted, does not seek succour in the gospel, which has brought *life and immortality to light*. The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence, but not content us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our sorrow, but cannot assuage it. Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy. Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but religion only can give patience.

THE VICISSITUDES OF NATURE ADAPTED TO ADMONISH US OF THE FLIGHT OF TIME.

The natural advantages which arise from the position of the earth which we inhabit, with respect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical speculation, by which it has been discovered that no other conformation of the system could have given such commodious distributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleasure to so great a part of a revolving sphere.

It may be, perhaps, observed by the moralist with equal reason, that our globe seems particularly fitted for the residence of a being, placed here only for a short time, whose task is to advance himself to a higher and happier state of existence by unremitting vigilance of caution and activity of virtue.

The duties required of a man are such as human nature does not willingly perform, and such as those are inclined to delay who yet intend some time to fulfil them. It was therefore necessary that this universal reluctance should be counteracted, and the drowsiness of hesitation wakened into resolve; that the danger of procrastination should be always in view, and the fallacies of security be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every side reminds us of the lapse of time and the flux of life. The day and night succeed each other; the rotation of seasons diversifies the year; the sun rises, attains the meridian, declines, and sets; and the moon every night changes its form.

The day has been considered as an image of the year, and the year as the representation of life.

The morning answers to the spring, and the spring to childhood and youth; the noon corresponds to the summer, and the summer to the strength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night, with its silence and darkness, shows the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life shall cease, with its hopes and pleasures.

He that is carried forward, however swiftly, by a motion equable and easy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus silently along, passed on through undistinguishable uniformity, we should never mark its approaches to the end of the course. If one hour were like another; if the passage of the sun did not show that the day is wasting; if the change of seasons did not impress upon us the flight of the year, quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobserved. If the parts of time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their departure or succession, but should live thoughtless of the past and careless of the future; without will, and perhaps without power to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which may probably remain.

But the course of time is so visibly marked that it is observed even by the birds of passage, and by nations who have raised their minds very little above animal instinct; there are human beings whose language does not supply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for day and night, for summer and winter.

Yet it is certain that these admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with such accuracy the course of time, appear to have little sensibility of the decline of life. Every man has some-

thing to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accustom ourselves to consider the effects of time, that things necessary and certain often surprise us like unexpected contingencies. We leave the beauty in her bloom, and, after an absence of twenty years, wonder at our return to find her faded. We meet those whom we left children, and can scarcely persuade ourselves to treat them as men. The traveller visits in age those countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of business, wearied with unsatisfactory prosperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the last years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, so general and so mischievous, let it be every man's study to exempt himself. Let him that desires to see others happy make haste to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember that every moment of delay takes away something from the value of his benefaction. And let him who purposes his own happiness reflect that, while he forms his purpose, the day rolls on, and "the night cometh when no man can work!"

PLEASURES AND PAINS OF MEMORY.

MEMORY is, among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the most frequent use, or, rather, that of which the agency is incessant or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination sup-

pose something already known, and draw their decisions only from experience. Imagination selects ideas from the treasures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of distant, or anticipations of future events, but by concluding what is possible from what is past.

The two offices of memory are collection and distribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for use. Collection is always the employment of our first years, and distribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and reposit the various forms of things is far the most pleasing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we see is new. When first we enter into the world, whithersoever we turn our eyes, they meet Knowledge with Pleasure at her side; every diversity of nature pours ideas in upon the soul; neither search nor labour is necessary; we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curiosity is gratified.

Much of the pleasure which the first survey of the world affords, is exhausted before we are conscious of our own felicity, or able to compare our condition with some other possible state. We have, therefore, few traces of the joy of our earliest discoveries; yet we all remember a time when nature had so many untasted gratifications, that every excursion gave delight which can now be found no longer; when the noise of a torrent, the rustle of a wood, the song of birds, or the play of lambs, had power to fill the attention, and suspend all perception of the course of time.

But these easy pleasures are soon at an end; we have seen in a very little time so much, that we call *out for new objects of observation, and endeavour to find variety in books and life.* But study is *laborious, and not always satisfactory; and conversation*

has its pains as well as pleasures: we are willing to learn, but not willing to be taught; we are pained by ignorance, but pained yet more by another's knowledge.

From the vexation of pupilage men commonly set themselves free about the middle of life, by shutting up the avenues of intelligence, and resolving to rest in their present state; and they whose ardour of inquiry continues longer, find themselves insensibly forsaken by their instructors. As every man advances in life, the proportion between those that are younger and that are older than himself is continually changing; and he that has lived half a century finds few that do not require from him that information which he once expected from those that went before him.

Then it is that the magazines of memory are opened, and the stores of accumulated knowledge are displayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honest commerce of mutual interest. Every man wants others, and is therefore glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of intense meditation without necessity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour seldom endeavours after farther acquisitions.

The pleasure of recollecting speculative notions would not be much less than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmixed with the passages of life: but such is the necessary concatenation of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleasure recurs but it is associated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time when something was enjoyed that is now lost, when some hope was yet not blasted, when some purpose had yet not languished into sluggishness or indifference.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts, or what is in the event just the same, that evil makes deeper impression than good, it is cer-

tion that no man can review the time past without heaviness of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many opportunities lost by negligence. The shades of the dead rise up before him: he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amusements, and the assistants of his labours, whom the hand of death has snatched away.

When an offer was made to Themistocles of teaching him the art of memory, he answered, that he would rather wish for the art of forgetfulness. He felt his imagination haunted by the phantoms of misery which he was unable to suppress, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with some oblivious antidote. In this we all resemble one another: the hero and the sage are alike vulgar mortals, overburdened by the weight of life; all shrink from recollection, and all wish for an art of forgetfulness.

Philosophy has accumulated precept upon precept, to warn us against the anticipation of future calamities. All useless misery is certainly folly, and he that feels evils before they come may be deservedly censured; yet surely to dread the future is more reasonable than to lament the past. The business of life is to go forward: he who sees evil in prospect meets it in his way; but he who catches it by retrospection turns back to find it. That which is feared may sometimes be avoided, but that which is regretted to-day may be regretted again to-morrow.

Regret is indeed useful and virtuous, and not only allowable, but necessary, when it tends to the amendment of life, or to admonition of error which we may be again in danger of committing. But a very small part of the moments spent in meditation on the past produce any reasonable caution or salutary sorrow. Most of the mortification that we have suffered arose from the concurrence of local and temporary circumstances which can never meet again; and most of our disappointments have suc-

ceeded those expectations, which life allows not to be formed a second time.

It would add much to human happiness if an art could be taught of forgetting all of which the remembrance is at once useless and afflictive ; if that pain which never can end in pleasure could be driven totally away, that the mind might perform its functions without encumbrance, and the past might no longer encroach upon the present.

Little can be done well to which the whole mind is not applied ; the business of every day calls for the day to which it is assigned ; and he will have no leisure to regret yesterday's vexation who resolves not to have a new subject of regret to-morrow.

But to forget or to remember at pleasure are equally beyond the power of man. Yet as memory may be assisted by method, and the decays of knowledge repaired by stated times of recollection, so the power of forgetting is capable of improvement. Reason will, by a resolute contest, prevail over imagination, and the power may be obtained of transferring the attention as judgment shall direct.

The incursions of troublesome thoughts are often violent and importunate ; and it is not easy to a mind accustomed to their inroads to expel them immediately by putting better images into motion ; but this enemy of quiet is, above all others, weakened by every defeat ; the reflection which has been once overpowered and ejected seldom returns with any formidable vehemence.

Employment is the great instrument of intellectual dominion. The mind cannot retire from its enemy into total vacancy, or turn aside from one object but by passing to another. The gloomy and the resentful are always found among those who have nothing to do or who do nothing. We must be busy about good or evil, and he to whom the present offers nothing will often be looking backward on the past.

HABIT OF EXAGGERATING WHATEVER RELATES TO OURSELVES.

THESE is not, perhaps, among the multitudes of all conditions that swarm upon the earth, a single man who does not believe that he has something extraordinary to relate of himself; and who does not, at one time or another, summon the attention of his friends to the casualties of his adventures and the vicissitudes of his fortune; casualties and vicissitudes that happen alike in lives uniform and diversified; to the commander of armies and the writer at a desk, to the sailor who resigns himself to the wind and water, and the farmer whose longest journey is to the market.

In the present state of the world men may pass through Shakspeare's seven stages of life, and meet nothing singular and wonderful. But such is every man's attention to himself, that what is common and unheeded when it is only seen, becomes remarkable and peculiar when we happen to feel it.

It is well enough known to be according to the usual process of nature, that men should sicken and recover; that some designs should succeed and others miscarry; that friends should be separated and meet again; that some should be made angry by endeavours to please them, and some be pleased when no care has been used to gain their approbation; that men and women should at first come together by chance, like each other so well as to commence acquaintance, improve acquaintance into fondness, increase or extinguish fondness by marriage, and have children of different degrees of intellects and virtue, some of whom die before their parents, and others survive them.

Yet let any tell his own story, and nothing of all

this has ever befallen him according to the common order of things ; something has always discriminated his case ; some unusual concurrence of events has appeared, which made him more happy or more miserable than other mortals ; for in pleasures or calamities, however common, every one has comforts and afflictions of his own.

It is certain that, without some artificial augmentations, many of the pleasures of life, and almost all its embellishments, would fall to the ground. If no man were to express more delight than he felt, those who felt most would raise little envy. If travellers were to describe the most laboured performances of art with the same coldness as they survey them, all expectations of happiness from change of place would cease. The pictures of Raphael would hang without spectators, and the gardens of Versailles might be inhabited by hermits. All the pleasure that is received ends in an opportunity of splendid falsehood, in the power of gaining notice by the display of beauties which the eye was weary of beholding, and a history of happy moments, of which, in reality, the most happy was the last.

The ambition of superior sensibility and superior eloquence disposes the lovers of arts to receive rapture at one time and communicate it at another ; and each labours first to impose upon himself, and then to propagate the imposture.

Pain is less subject than pleasure to caprices of expression. The torments of disease and the grief for irremediable misfortunes sometimes are such as no words can declare, and can only be signified by groans, or sobs, or inarticulate ejaculations. Man has from nature a mode of utterance peculiar to pain, but he has none peculiar to pleasure, because he never has pleasure but in such degrees as the ordinary use of language may equal or surpass.

It is nevertheless certain, that many pains as well as pleasures are heightened by rhetorical affects.

tion, and that the picture is, for the most part, bigger than the life.

When we describe our sensations of another's sorrow, either in friendly or ceremonious condolence, the customs of the world scarcely admit of rigid veracity. Perhaps the fondest friendship would encourage oftener than comfort, were the tongue on such occasions faithfully to represent the sentiments of the heart; and I think the strictest moralists allow forms of address to be used without much regard to their literal acceptation, when either respect or tenderness requires them, because they are universally known to denote, not the degree, but the species of our sentiments.

But the same indulgence cannot be allowed to him who aggravates dangers incurred or sorrow endured by himself, because he darkens the prospect of futurity, and multiplies the pains of our condition by useless terror. Those who magnify their delights are less criminal deceivers, yet they raise hopes which are sure to be disappointed. It would be undoubtedly best if we could see and hear everything as it is, that nothing might be too anxiously dreaded or too ardently pursued.

FAMILIARITY LESSENS REVERENCE.

It has been commonly remarked, that eminent men are least eminent at home; that bright characters lose much of their splendour at a nearer view; and many who fill the world with their fame excite very little reverence among those that surround them in their domestic privacies.

To blame or to suspect is easy and natural. When the fact is evident and the cause doubtful,

some accusation is always engendered between idleness and malignity. This disparity of general and familiar esteem is therefore imputed to hidden vices, and to practices indulged in secret, but carefully covered from the public eye.

Vice will, indeed, always produce contempt. The dignity of Alexander, though nations fell prostrate before him, was certainly held in little veneration by the partakers of his midnight revels, who had seen him, in the madness of wine, murder his friend or set fire to the Persian palace at the instigation of a harlot; and it is well remembered among us, that the avarice of Marlborough kept him in subjection to his wife, while he was dreaded by France as her conqueror, and honoured by the emperor as his deliverer.

But though where there is vice there must be want of reverence, it is not reciprocally true that when there is want of reverence there is always vice. That awe which great actions or abilities impress will be inevitably diminished by acquaintance, though nothing either mean or criminal should be found.

Of men, as of everything else, we must judge according to our knowledge. When we see of a hero only his battles, or of a writer only his books, we have nothing to allay our ideas of their greatness. We consider the one only as the guardian of his country, and the other only as the instructor of mankind. We have neither opportunity nor motive to examine the minuter parts of their lives, or the less apparent peculiarities of their characters; we name them with habitual respect, and forget, what we still continue to know, that they are men like other mortals.

But such is the constitution of the world, that much of life must be spent in the same manner by the wise and the ignorant, the exalted and the low. Men, however distinguished by external accidents

or intrinsic qualities, have all the same wants, the same pains, and, as far as the senses are consulted, the same pleasure. The petty cares and petty duties are the same in every station to every understanding, and every hour brings some occasion on which we all sink to the common level. We are all naked till we are dressed, and hungry till we are fed; and the general's triumph and sage's disputation end, like the humble labours of the smith or ploughman, in a dinner or in sleep.

Those notions which are to be collected by reason in opposition to the senses, will seldom stand forward in the mind, but lie treasured in the remoter repositories of memory, to be found only when they are sought. Whatever any man may have written or done, his precepts or his valour will scarcely overbalance the unimportant uniformity which runs through his time. We do not easily consider him as great whom our own eyes show us to be little, nor labour to keep present to our thoughts the latent excellences of him who shares with us all our weaknesses and many of our follies; who, like us, is delighted with slight amusements, busied with trifling employments, and disturbed by little vexations.

Great powers cannot be exerted but when great exigences make them necessary. Great exigences can happen but seldom, and therefore those qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind lie hid, for the most part, like subterranean treasures, over which the foot passes as on common ground, till necessity breaks open the golden cavern.

In the ancient celebration of victory, a slave was placed on a triumphal car by the side of the general, who reminded him, by a short sentence, that he was a man. Whatever danger there might be lest a leader, in his passage to the capitol, should forget the frailties of his nature, there was surely

no need of such an admonition : the intoxication could not have continued long ; he would have been at home but a few hours before some of his dependants would have forgotten his greatness, and shown him that, notwithstanding his laurels, he was yet a man.

There are some who try to escape this domestic degradation by labouring to appear always wise or always great ; but he that strives against nature will for ever strive in vain. To be grave of mien and slow of utterance, to look with solicitude and speak with hesitation, is attainable at will ; but the show of wisdom is ridiculous when there is nothing to cause doubt, as that of valour when there is nothing to be feared.

A man who has duly considered the condition of his being will contentedly yield to the course of things ; he will not pant for distinction where distinction would imply no merit ; and though, on great occasions, he may wish to be greater than others, he will be satisfied in common occurrences not to be less.

ON SELF-DENIAL.

THE practice of self-denial, or the forbearance of lawful pleasures, has been considered by almost every nation, from the remotest ages, as the highest exaltation of human virtue ; and all have agreed to pay respect and veneration to those who abstained from the delights of life, even when they did not censure those who enjoyed them.

The general voice of mankind, civil and barbarous, confesses that the mind and body are at variance, and that neither can be made happy by its

proper gratifications but at the expense of the other; that a pampered body will darken the mind, and an enlightened mind will macerate the body. And none have failed to confer their esteem on those who prefer intellect to sense, who control their lower by their higher faculties, and forget the wants and desires of animal life for rational disquisitions or pious contemplations.

The earth has scarcely a country so far advanced towards political regularity as to divide the inhabitants into classes, where some orders of men or women are not distinguished by voluntary severities, and where the reputation of their sanctity is not increased in proportion to the rigour of their rules and the exactness of their performance.

When an opinion to which there is no temptation of interest spreads wide and continues long, it may reasonably be presumed to have been issued by nature or dictated by reason. It has been often observed, that the fictions of imposture and illusions of fancy soon give way to time and experience; and that nothing keeps its ground but truth, which gains every day new influence by new confirmation.

But truth, when it is reduced to practice, easily becomes subject to caprice and imagination; and many particular acts will be wrong, though their general principle be right. It cannot be denied, that a just conviction of the restraint necessary to be laid upon the appetites has produced extravagant and unnatural modes of mortification, and institutions which, however favourably considered, will be found to violate nature without promoting piety.

But the doctrine of self-denial is not weakened in itself by the errors of those who misinterpret or misapply it; the encroachment of the appetites upon the understanding is hourly perceived; and the state of those whom sensuality has enslaved is

known to be in the highest degree despicable and wretched.

The dread of such shameful captivity may justly raise alarms, and wisdom will endeavour to keep danger at a distance. By timely caution and suspicious vigilance, those desires may be repressed to which indulgence would soon give absolute dominion; these enemies may be overcome, which, when they have been a while accustomed to victory, can no longer be resisted.

Nothing is more fatal to happiness or virtue than that confidence which flatters us with an opinion of our own strength, and, by assuring us of the power of retreat, precipitates us into hazard. Some may safely venture farther than others into the regions of delight, lay themselves more open to the golden shafts of pleasure, and advance nearer to the residence of the Sirens; but he that is best armed with constancy and reason is yet vulnerable in one part or other; and to every man there is a point fixed, beyond which, if he passes, he will not easily return. It is certainly most wise, as it is most safe, to stop before he touches the utmost limit, since every step of advance will more and more entice him to go forward, till he shall at last enter into the recesses of voluptuousness, and sloth and despondency close the passage behind him.

To deny early and inflexibly is the only art of checking the importunity of desire, and of preserving quiet and innocence. Innocent gratifications must be sometimes withheld; he that complies with all lawful desires will certainly lose his empire over himself, and, in time, either submit his reason to his wishes, and think all his desires lawful, or dismiss his reason as troublesome and intrusive, and resolve to snatch what he may happen to wish, without inquiring about right and wrong.

No man, whose appetites are his masters, can perform the duties of his nature with strictness and

regularity ; he that would be superior to external influences, must first become superior to his own passions.

When the Roman general, sitting at supper with a plate of turnips before him, was solicited by large presents to betray his trust, he asked the messengers whether he that could sup on turnips was a man likely to sell his country. Upon him who has reduced his senses to obedience, temptation has lost its power ; he is able to attend impartially to virtue, and execute her commands without hesitation.

To set the mind above the appetites is the end of abstinence, which one of the fathers observes to be not a virtue, but the groundwork of virtue. By forbearing to do what may innocently be done, we may add hourly new vigour to resolution, and secure the power of resistance when pleasure or interest shall lend their charms to guilt.

HUMAN SCHEMES AND THEIR RESULTS CONTRASTED.

WHEN the philosophers of the last age were first congregated into the Royal Society, great expectations were raised of the sudden progress of useful arts ; the time was supposed to be near when engines should turn by a perpetual motion, and health be secured by the universal medicine ; when learning should be facilitated by an easy character, and commerce extended by ships which could reach their ports in defiance of the tempest.

But improvement is naturally slow. The society met and parted without any visible diminution of the miseries of life. The gout and stone were still *painful*, the ground that was not ploughed brought

no harvest, and neither oranges nor grapes would grow upon the hawthorn. At last, those who were disappointed began to be angry; those, likewise, who hated innovation, were glad to gain an opportunity of ridiculing men who had depreciated, perhaps, with too much arrogance, the knowledge of antiquity. And it appears, from some of their earliest apologies, that the philosophers felt with great sensibility the unwelcome importunities of those who were daily asking, "What have ye done!"

The truth is, that little has been done compared with what fame had been suffered to promise; and the question could only be answered by general apologies and by new hopes, which, when they were frustrated, gave a new occasion to the same vexatious inquiry.

This fatal question has disturbed the quiet of many other minds. He that in the latter part of his life too strictly inquires what he has done, can very seldom receive from his own heart such an account as will give him satisfaction.

We do not, indeed, so often disappoint others as ourselves. We not only think more highly than others of our own abilities, but allow ourselves to form hopes which we never communicate, and please our thoughts with employments which none ever will allot us, and with elevations to which we are never expected to rise; and when our days and years are passed away in common business or common amusements, and we find, at last, that we have suffered our purposes to sleep till the time of action is past, we are reproached only by our own reflections. Neither our friends nor our enemies wonder that we live and die like the rest of mankind; that we live without notice, and die without memorial; they know not what task we had proposed, and, therefore, cannot discern whether it is finished.

He that compares what he has done with what

he has left undone, will feel the effect which must always follow the comparison of imagination with reality ; he will look with contempt on his own unimportance, and wonder to what purpose he came into the world ; he will repine that he shall leave behind him no evidence of his having been, that he has added nothing to the system of life, but has glided from youth to age among the crowd, without any effort for distinction.

Man is seldom willing to let fall the opinion of his own dignity, or to believe that he does little only because every individual is a very little being. He is better content to want diligence than power, and sooner confesses the depravity of his will than the imbecility of his nature.

From this mistaken notion of human greatness it proceeds, that many who pretend to have made great advances in wisdom so loudly declare that they despise themselves. If I had ever found any of the self-contemners much irritated or pained by the consciousness of their meanness, I should have given them consolation by observing, that a little more than nothing is as much as can be expected from a being who, with respect to the multitudes about him, is himself little more than nothing. Every man is obliged by the Supreme Master of the universe to improve all the opportunities of good which are afforded him, and to keep in continual activity such abilities as are bestowed upon him. But he has no reason to repine, though his abilities are small and his opportunities few. He that has improved the virtue or advanced the happiness of one fellow-creature ; he that has ascertained a single moral proposition, or added one useful experiment to natural knowledge, may be contented with his own performance, and, with respect to mortals *like himself*, may demand, like Augustus, to be dismissed at his departure with applause.

PHYSICAL EVIL THE SOURCE OF MORAL GOOD.

How evil came into this world—for what reason it is that life is overspread with such boundless varieties of misery—why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think, merely to be wretched, and to pass his time from youth to age in fearing or in suffering calamities, is a question which philosophers have long asked, and which philosophy could never answer.

Religion informs us that misery and sin were produced together. The depravation of human will was followed by a disorder of the harmony of nature; and by that Providence which often places antidotes in the neighbourhood of poisons, vice was checked by misery, lest it should swell to universal and unlimited dominion.

A state of innocence and happiness is so remote from all that we have ever seen, that, though we can easily conceive it possible, and may, therefore, hope to attain it, yet our speculations upon it must be general and confused. We can discover that where there is universal innocence, there will probably be universal happiness; for why should afflictions be permitted to infest beings who are not in danger of corruption from blessings, and where there is no use for terror nor cause of punishment? But in a world like ours, where our senses assault us and our hearts betray us, we should pass on from crime to crime, heedless and remorseless, if misery did not stand in our way, and our own pains admonish us of our folly.

Almost all the moral good which is left among us is the apparent effect of physical evil.

Goodness is divided by divines into soberness, righteousness, and godliness. Let it be examined,

how each of these duties would be practised if there were no physical evil to enforce it.

Sobriety or temperance is nothing but the forbearance of pleasure ; and if pleasure was not followed by pain, who would forbear it ? We see every hour those in whom the desire of present indulgence overpowers all sense of past and all foresight of future misery. In a remission of the gout, the drunkard returns to his wine and the glutton to his feast ; and if neither disease nor poverty was felt or dreaded, every one would sink down in idle sensuality, without any care of others or of himself. To eat and drink, and lie down to sleep, would be the whole business of mankind.

Righteousness, or the system of social duty, may be subdivided into justice and charity. Of justice, one of the heathen sages has shown with great acuteness that it was impressed upon mankind only by the inconveniences which injustice had produced. "In the first ages," says he, "men acted without any rules but the impulse of desire ; they practised injustice upon others, and suffered it from others in their turn ; but in time it was discovered that the pain of suffering wrong was greater than the pleasure of doing it ; and mankind, by a general compact, submitted to the restraint of laws, and resigned the pleasure to escape the pain."

Of charity, it is superfluous to observe, that it could have no place if there were no want ; for of a virtue which could not be practised, the omission could not be culpable. Evil is not only the occasional, but the efficient cause of charity ; we are incited to the relief of misery by the consciousness that we have the same nature with the sufferer ; that we are in danger of the same distresses, and may sometimes implore the same assistance.

Godliness or piety is elevation of the mind towards the Supreme Being, and extension of the thoughts to another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is invisible. None would

fix their attention upon the future but that they are discontented with the present. 'If the senses were feasted with perpetual pleasure, they would always keep the mind in subjection. Reason has no authority over us but by its power to warn us against evil.

In childhood, while our minds are yet unoccupied, religion is impressed upon them, and the first years of almost all who have been well educated are passed in a regular discharge of the duties of piety. But as we advance forward into the crowds of life, innumerable delights solicit our inclinations, and innumerable cares distract our attention ; the time of youth is passed in noisy frolics ; manhood is led on from hope to hope, and from project to project ; the dissoluteness of pleasure, the inebriation of success, the ardour of expectation, and the vehemence of competition, chain down the mind alike to the present scene, nor is it remembered how soon this mist of trifles must be scattered, and the bubbles that float upon the rivulet of life be lost for ever in the gulf of eternity. To this consideration scarcely any man is awakened but by some pressing and resistless evil. The death of those from whom he derived his pleasures or to whom he destined his possessions ; some disease which shows him the vanity of all external acquisitions, or the gloom of age, which intercepts his prospects of long enjoyment, forces him to fix his hopes upon another state, and, when he has contended with the tempests of life till his strength fails him, he flies at last to the shelter of religion.

That misery does not make all virtuous, experience too clearly informs us ; but it is no less certain that, of what virtue there is, misery produces far the greater part. Physical evil may be, therefore, endured with patience, since it is the cause of moral good ; and patience itself is one virtue by which we are prepared for that state in which evil shall be no more.

THE END.





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